

THIRTEEN  
SERMONS  
UPON

Several Useful Subjects.

Two of them

Being Funeral Discourses, occasioned by  
the Death of the Reverend Mr. Na-  
thanael Mitchel, Minister of the Gospel.

- I. *The Crown of Righteousness, and for whom prepared.* Upon 1 Tim. 4. 7. 1. 2 Sermon.
- II. *The Influence of God upon getting wealth.* Upon Deut. 8. 18. 1 Sermon.
- III. *The small influence that abundance hath upon mans life.* Upon Luke 12. 15. 1 Sermon.
- IV. *The nature of that Testimony, which Christians are bound to give to the Lord Jesus Christ.* Upon 2 Tim. 1. 8. 4 Sermon.
- V. *The nature of Persecution for Righteousness sake, and the blessedness of those so persecuted.* Upon Matth. 5. 10. 3 Sermon.
- VI. *The Riddle of a persecuted Believers life.* Upon 2 Cor. 4. 9. 1 Sermon.
- VII. *How Persecution turneth to Believers, for a Testimony.* From Luke 21. 13. 1 Sermon.

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By John Collinges, D. D.

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# SERMONS

UPON  
Several Useful Subjects

Two of them

Being Sermons Preached at the Death of the Reverend Mr. John ...

I. The Crown of Righteousness, &c. for them that are faithful. 1 Tim. 4. 8. 1 Sermon.

II. The happiness of God when sinners are saved. 1 Cor. 13. 8. 1 Sermon.

III. The joyful assurance that sinners have when they are saved. 1 Cor. 13. 8. 1 Sermon.

IV. The nature of the testimony which God gives to the soul. 1 Cor. 13. 8. 1 Sermon.

V. The nature of the testimony which God gives to the soul. 1 Cor. 13. 8. 1 Sermon.

VI. The nature of the testimony which God gives to the soul. 1 Cor. 13. 8. 1 Sermon.

VII. The nature of the testimony which God gives to the soul. 1 Cor. 13. 8. 1 Sermon.

VIII. The nature of the testimony which God gives to the soul. 1 Cor. 13. 8. 1 Sermon.

IX. The nature of the testimony which God gives to the soul. 1 Cor. 13. 8. 1 Sermon.

X. The nature of the testimony which God gives to the soul. 1 Cor. 13. 8. 1 Sermon.

By John ...

Printed by T. B. in the Strand, near the ...



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To my Dear Sister,

Mrs. Mary Mitchel.

Dearest Sister,

When I composed the following Discourses, it was in the same straits of time which usually are allowed for Meditations of that nature, nor did I ever think of a further Publication, then to those that heard me, nor do I see any thing in them worthy of a more publick remark, unless the great President of Divine Grace, which it pleased God to shew you in the Man of your Bosom, by the Power of which Grace, he was saved in a Battle, wherein few escape. I know not

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what

what particular fancy it is that some Persons have to Sermons made upon Funeral Occasions, that hath obtained of me the copy of these Notes. I hope it is their desires of many remembrances of their latter end, which we have all sufficient need of. Our Prophets are gone, Our Fathers, where are they? When once I had agreed the Publication of them, I needed no deliberation to whom I should inscribe them. You Dear Sister! had the greatest share in him, to whose memory they were designed, you had the nearest view of his Conversation, for more then twenty years, you were the greatest sharer in his long trial of affliction. These things considered, with my Relation to you, made me quickly determine that thing. I shall think my labour not lost in transcribing these Papers, if any thing in them, as well as the Example of your late dear Husband may incourage you, or be any ways helpful to you, in fighting the

the good fight, and finishing your course. The decays we find in our selves, the deaths of our Friends, the daily Bells we hear telling us that such or such Persons (our Neighbours) are removed to their long homes, mind us of our mortality. Our Bones are not of Brass, nor our Sinews of Iron, which yet if they were, both the one and the other we see are daily diminishing, by the influence of the ill air, in which we breath. Our very breath is no such inheritance as doth not corrupt, and fade away. Our dearest Friends that are dissolved, have only got the start of us, we are in the same race, and must stop at the same post. Death is the End of all. It is more then forty years that he who was the common Father both to you and me, left this world. Some of whose last words to me were, Dear Child! Learn to die, Fear God, and keep his Commandments, so shalt

Thalt thou learn to die. We have  
been since that more then forty years at  
School in the world, to learn (amongst  
others) this one great thing to Die.  
We have had many Friends, many dear  
Relations since that time, who have by  
their dying Examples, been speaking  
over the same thing to us : Learn to  
die. This discourse is of that tenden-  
cy to learn us this great Lesson; That the  
Lord would bless it to my self, to you,  
to all that shall read it, is the Prayer  
of

Your most Affectionate Brother,

John Collinges.

TO THE  
Christian Reader.

Reader,

**T**Hou hast here put together  
*Thirteen Sermons*, of very  
*heterogeneous Subjects*. I  
desire thou shouldst understand that  
the *Composition* pleased the *Bookseller*,  
not the *Author*, who upon that ac-  
count hath nothing to say to thee,  
but that he hopes there is none of  
these discourses, but may be useful  
to any Persons. He that is *Rich*,  
had need know, and remember,  
*That it is the Lord that giveth to man a  
power to get wealth.* He that is *Poor*,  
had need not only to know that, but  
that a mans life lyeth not in the abun-  
dance of what any one possesseth. Both  
*Rich*

*To the Christian Reader.*

*Rich and Poor had need understand how to finish their course, fight the good fight, and keep the faith. When men complain of Persecution, they had need understand what it is, & when they speak of giving Testimony to Christ and his Gospel, they had need know what kind of Testimony that should be, that they may not suffer in vain. Thou art Reader to expect nothing in these discourses, but what was proper to discourse to a plain Country Auditory, which came to hear out of love to Gods Word, and the truths in it revealed ( at least I hope so ) not to hear a lovely Song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument. If any thing in these discourses may do thee good, I shall rejoice, and be exceeding glad; and that all in them may, shall be the hearty prayer of one that wisheth well to every Soul, and is*

*Thy Friend, J. C.*



An Account of the  
**Crown of Righteousness**

**SERMON I.**

2 Timothy 4. 7. 8.

*I have fought a good fight, I have finished  
my course, I have kept the faith: hence-  
forth there is laid up for me a Crown of  
Righteousness, which the Righteous  
Judge shall give unto me in that day,  
and not unto me only, but to all those who  
love his appearance.*

**H**E who speaketh these words, is the  
great Apostle of the Gentiles, one who  
had been in deaths often, who had been  
for Christ's sake killed all the day long (as he  
speaks,) Rom. 8. 36. who died daily (as he else-  
where tells us) yet was not wearied out of  
his life) and was willing to be dying still; so  
that Christ might be magnified in his body by  
life or death. And though he desired to be dis-  
solved, yet it was upon better motives than  
the tedium or burden of his dying life, that he  
might be with Christ, which was best of all. Not

Phil. 1. 20.

v. 23.

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that

## An Account of the

that he might be ~~undisabled~~, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life (as he speaks, 2 Cor. 5. 4.) nor was he so fond of glory, but he preferreth his service to Christ before a present entrance into it; and was willing to wait God's time. I am, saith he, in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know I shall abide, and continue with you all. But a time must come when Israel must die. Do our Prophets live for ever? And it pleaseth God to give some of his People notices of this time. Paul's time was now come. He tells Timothy in the verse before the Text, I am now ready to be offered, the words in the Greek are, I am now already offered. Paul was ready, as that term in our Language signifies prepared, but the Greek word is *en*, which rather signifies already than prepared (into which sense it cannot be interpreted) the next words interpret it, The time of my departure is at hand. Nor certainly doth the Apostle speak this meely upon the prospect that all Christian Prisoners (especially Teachers amongst them) might reasonably have of their fate, under such a Pagan Tyrant and Butcher as Nero (under whose Government and Power he was at this time) was, but upon some more special and particular notice which God had given him, that his time was at hand. He speaks of it without trembling, and saith not to Death, (tho it was to be violent) Hast thou found me O mine Enemy!

## Crown of Righteousness.

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Enemy: but with confidence & chearfulness he entertaineth the thoughts and prospect of it. This Text tells you the grounds of his chearfulness. 1. *His work was done.* 2. *He had wages to take.* The first he openeth by 3 phrases. 1. *I have fought a good fight, & a good & hard,* that excellent fight (as Beza well translates it.) 2. *I have finished my course.* 3. *I have kept the Faith.* 2. *He had wages to take,* which he could not receive upon Earth. *And now is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, &c.* I shall only turn the Text into a Proposition, concluding from Paul's work, and confidence, the duty of all.

Prop. Those who would at death have the Crown of Righteousness, which is laid up for, and which God the Righteous Judge will one day give out unto some persons, must fight the good fight; finish their course, keep the faith, and love the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ; and those who do these things may know that there is such a Crown of Righteousness laid up for them, which the Righteous Judge will give out to them.

Here are two Propositions put together.

1. That there is a Crown of Righteousness, which God hath laid up, and will one day give out as a Righteous Judge to some amongst the Sons of men.
2. That it shall be given out to such, and such only, as fight the good fight, finish their course, keep the faith, and love the Appearance of Christ.

I shall discourse them severally, then apply them together.

1. There is a Crown of Righteousness, which is

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laid up, and God as a Righteous Judge will one day give out to some amongst the Sons of men.

I. That this Crown of Righteousness, is no other than the Crown of glory, Eternal life and happiness, is out of doubt, the Blessed state of the Saints in Heaven is set out in Scripture unto us under a variety of Metaphors, importing the satisfaction of the whole Soul there, and all the powers and faculties of it.

1 Pet. 5. 4. It is sometimes set out under the Notion of a Feast, a Banquet, sometimes under the Notion of seeing God, sometimes under the Notion of an Inheritance, immortal, incorruptible, &c. sometimes under the Notion of a Kingdom, a Crown, sometimes under Notions of profit, the riches of glory, sometimes under Notions of pleasure; here it is called a Crown. So 1 Pet. 5. 4. it is called a Crown of glory, and a Crown of life, Jam. 1. 12. But 1. Why a Crown? 2. Why is it called a Crown of Righteousness? 3. How is it laid up? 4. How doth, or shall God shew himself a Righteous Judge in giving it out?

1. Possibly it is called a Crown with reference to the Combatants in the Roman Games, in which the Victors had not only Prizes for which they ran, but also Crowns of Bays, or Lawrel, or some green things. If a man strive for Masteries, saith the Apostle, 2 Tim. 2. 5. he is not crowned except he strive lawfully. As the Conquerours were enriched with a Regatta or a prize for which they ran, or wrestled, or fought, so they were honoured with a *στέφανος*, a Crown which was set on their heads; and thus it lets us know, 1. That Heaven will be a place

## Crown of Righteousness.

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place of great honour and dignity. 2. That those who obtain it, must strive, fight, wrestle, and that lawfully (as the Apostle speaks) yea and they must conquer. None but the Conquerours in those Games were crowned. The consideration of Heaven as a Crown, ought to mind us of our duty, to strive, and fight. It is not compared to an ordinary King's Crown, which it may be comes to him by Election, or Inheritance, but a Combatants Crown, which is never put on his head till he be declared Victor.

2. Secondly, This Notion is expressive of the high reward of the Saints in Heaven. A Crown is the highest dignity; hence it is called also a Kingdom; Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you. Thus the Metaphor is used, I am. 5. 16. The Crown is fallen from our heads (that is) we have lost our greatest honour and dignity. Such shall be the honour of all the Saints, it shall not be only a Penny, a reward of their labour, but it shall be a Crown, the highest and greatest reward, such a one as no Eye hath seen, no Ear hath heard, neither can it enter into the heart of man to conceive; we can fancy no higher honour and dignity, than that of a Crown, and therefore it is expressed by that, but it will be no ordinary Crown, but a Crown of Life, a Crown of Glory.

3. Possibly it may be thus expressed, to signify the fulness of the Saints happiness in Heaven. The figure of a Crown lets you know that it incompasseth the whole head, not a part of it only. At thy right hand (saith the Psalmist) Psal. 16. 11.



*mist*) there are pleasures, and a fulness of pleasures, and that for evermore. The glory of the Saints in Heaven shall incompass them as a Crown doth the head. God in this life incompasseth his People with favour, as a shield (as the Psalmist speaketh) in the life to come he will incompass them with glory as with a Crown. In this life we have our good things but in part. *Nemo est ex omni parte beatus*, there is scarce any to be found, who is every way happy. One hath an head at ease, but an aking heart; another hath an heart at ease, but an aking head; but in Heaven the Saints shall be crowned, perfectly happy, on all sides blessed.

2. Qu. But why is this called a Crown of Righteousness, not only a Crown of life, and a Crown of Glory but a Crown of Righteousness?

1. I answer, Not because it is the merit of our Righteousness. Our Righteousness is all a rag, a filthy Rag. The next words are enough to Satisfy us as to this, Which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, will give, to them who love his appearance, if it be a guilt it is not paid for; nor can it be thought that the love of Christs appearance should be judged a proportionable price to a Crown. A Crown is a thing above a Purchase.

2. But it may be called so with reference to Christs Righteousness. By his Righteousness (saith the Prophet) or, By his knowledge shall my Righteous Servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities, and whom he justified them he also glorified (saith the Apostle :) The Heavens



### *Crown of Righteousness.*

Heavens were to be sprinkled with his blood before we could have any entrance into them. He dyed as well as ascended, that he might prepare a place for us in those blessed Mansions. The Saints Crowns are the Purchase of Christs Righteousness.

3. Thirdly, It may be so called with reference to Gods Righteousness, and that whether we take Righteousness as signifying Justice, or Truth and faithfulness. If we take Righteousness as signifying Justice: If (saith the Apostle) we confess our sins, he is faithful, and just, to forgive us our sins. God is just to give his Son, the Travel of his Soul: The fruit of his purchase. If we take it as signifying Truth or faithfulness: So also the glory of Heaven is a Crown of Righteousness, as it is a promised reward, what the truth of God in many promises stands engaged for.

1 Joh. 1.9.

4. Lastly, It is also a Crown of our Righteousness. That is, the noble, and ample reward of our Righteousness. The reward not of debt, but of grace, Estius would have it called the Crown of Righteousness because purchased or merited by our works, or our Righteousness, but that place, Psal. 103. 4. much troubleth him; Who crowneth thee with loving kindness, he pretendeth some answer to it, but that is the least we have to say against the merit of works, God useth not to Crown men with Cloaths, or filthy Rags. He useth not to Crown our works, but his own works in us, yea he himself is the Crown of his people, Isaiah 28. 5. The Lord himself shall be a Crown

Psal. 103.4.

of glory, and a diadem of beauty for the residue of his people.

Qu. How is this Crown said to be laid up?

The same word is used to the same Sense, Colos. I. 5. For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven. Criticks observe, That it is used to express such a laying aside, or laying up: as when a thing is laid up for a future use or a future provision, as when men lay up for their Children: So we shall find it used in Mat. 25. in the parable of the Talents, to express the action of him who having but one Talent laid it up in a napkin. Once in Scripture, I find it used in another sense, Heb. 9. 27. It is appointed for all men once to dye, and that (by the way) giveth some further light into this Text, the Crown of Righteousness is laid up for the Saints in the Eternal Counsels of God; in this sense it is called, The Kingdom prepared for them, Matth. 25. 34. before the foundation of the world. The word importeth,

1. The Preparation, or designation of something for the use of some particular person.
2. The Reservation of it or the safe keeping of it for those persons for whom it is so designed and prepared. There is a Crown of Righteousness, designed by God for some, laid up in Gods decree, and eternal thoughts for them from before the foundation of the World, and laid up, that is, safely reserved and kept for them, secured by the immutability of Gods will and counsel, for he is not as man that he should lye, nor as the Son of man that he should repent.

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## Crown of Righteousness.

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I have now done with the first Proposition.  
I pass to the second.

Prop. 2. *That those to whom the Righteous Judge will give this Crown must be such who have fought the good fight, Finished their course, kept the faith, and who love the appearance of our Lord Jesus.*

We must inquire into the meaning of all these.

Q. 1. *What is this to fight the good fight?*

Here are two things.

1. *What is this good fight?*

2. *What fighting is here meant?*

1. *The calling of it the good fight, imports that there are some bad fights.*

1. *There is a fighting against God.* This is a bad fight in all senses. It is that Rebellion which Samuel said is as the sin of *Wichcraft*. It is the Rebellion of the Creature against the Creator, of the Clay against the Potter, of the Child against the Father. It is a bad fight in the nature of it, and it is alwaies bad in the issue of it. It is a setting of briars and thorns against God in battel; a kicking against the pricks, (as our Lord told Paul, *Acts 9.*) yet the world was alwaies full of *Hectors*, hardy enough to engage in this fight; there are such as are fighters against God, and indeed all sinners are such in heart, though they some of them keep their hands in their pockets; but such Persecutors, and such as set themselves in opposition to the Gospel, and the Interest of God in the world, in opposition to the Truth, and True Worship and Ordinances  
of

of God; such as set themselves against a Gospel-Ministry, and against Holiness; these are all fighters against God. This now is the bad fight, materially bad, and what will be found so *Eventually*.

2. There is also a *fighting against men on civil accounts*, which is a *bad fight*; indeed most Wars are so (at least on one side.) Wars are *State Physick*, and when they are so used and made they are good, otherwise they are bad. In all Wars, one Army is made up of Murderers: Both sides cannot be right. We are commanded to *seek Peace, and insue it, as much as in us lieth to have peace with all men*. Wars are not to be used as sports. The word which is here translated *good*, signifieth *fair, wholesom, noble, excellent*. Thus you read of the Tree that bringeth forth *good fruit*, *Mat. 7. 17*. And Christ saith, that the woman which had spent her *box of Ointment* upon him, had done *καλὸν ἔργον*, a good work, *Mat. 26. 10*. that is, an excellent, noble, praise-worthy work, as our Saviour in the next words expounds himself, saying, *That where-soever the Gospel should be preached, that which she had done should be told for a memorial of her*. But what is this *good fight* which Paul saith he had fought? He expoundeth himself, *1 Tim. 6. 12*. *Fight the good fight of faith*. Faith is the combatant grace, it is that by which we get the Victory. But who are the Enemies with which this *good fight* is to be fought? Who can they be but the three great Enemies of our Souls the *World, the Flesh, and the Devil*? Paul fought

fought them all, and so must every one fight them all, who will put in his claim to the *Crown of Righteousness*.

1. *He must manage his good fight against the World*; the men of it, and the things of it. Paul had fought this good fight, 1 Cor. 15. 32. he fought with Beasts at Ephesus after the manner of men, and he telleth us, 1 Cor. 11. 24. he had had stripes above measure, he had been in Prisons frequent, in deaths often; five times he had of the Jews received forty stripes save one; thrice he was beaten with Rods; once he was stoned; all this in maintenance and defence of the Gospel. Thus must every Christian duly of God called to it, do in defence of the holy Truths and Waies of the Lord Jesus Christ. The World, the Men of the World were alwaies peevish to God's holy ones. Our Saviour giveth us the reason, Job. 15. 19. *because they are not of the world, but God hath chosen them out of the world.* Wisdom was never justified in the world of any more than her Children. Now those who ever hope to come in the Kingdom of Heaven, must look to manage this part of the *good fight*, not fearing those who can kill the body, and when they have done that; can do no more, but fearing him alone, who can cast body and soul into Hell fire; taking up their Cross, and following of Christ, bearing up against all the opposition the world can give or make against them, walking according to the holy Commandment.

2. But this *good fight* is not onely to be managed

Heb. II. 25,  
26.

managed against the men of the world, setting themselves in opposition to the Truths and Waies of God; but also against the *things of the world*, the deceitfulness of pleasures, riches, honours, whatsoever may be to us a bait alluring us to sin against God. Moses by Faith did fight the World in this manner, refusing the pleasures of Pharaoh's Court, and chusing rather to suffer with the People of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; and esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures in Egypt. But indeed this rather belongs to the second piece of the good fight which is to be managed.

Rom. 7. 23

Gal. 5. 17.

2. *Against our own Lusts.* By lusts we understand those motions, and inclinations, to sin which are from our fleshly part, for Lusts are nothing but *unlawful desires* in our Souls. Paul fought this part of the good fight, he tells us, That he saw a law in his members warring against the law of his mind and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members. And again, That the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, for those two are contrary. Paul fought this part of the good fight, 1 Cor. 9. 27. I keep under my body and bring it unto Subjection. This is, that Mortifying of our members, mentioned, Col. 3. 5. Mortifying the deeds of the body through the Spirit mentioned, Rom. 8. 13. The Apostle Peter tells us that *Fleshly lusts war against the Soul*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. and James tells us that *Lust war in our members*, James 4. 1. Paul fought this part of the good fight, and overcame; I thank God (saith he) through Jesus Christ our Lord. Indeed



deed this is the hardest battel that a Christian hath to fight the Enemy is within, those of his own house and all the advantage which either the World, or the Devil hath against us is from that party of lusts which are in our own hearts. Though the Prince of the World came against Christ, yet finding nothing of this nature in our blessed Lord he could do nothing against him.

3. Our third great adversary is the Devil. For we (saith the Apostle,) Eph. 6. 12. Do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against Principalities, and powers, and the Rulers of the darkness of this World. The Devil is called the adversary and the Apostle telleth us, that he goeth about like a roaring Lyon seeking whom he may devour, and calleth upon us to Resist him. He fighteth us sometimes by his commanders, and under-officers, those are the sinful men of the World; sometimes he fights us in person, by his more immediate impressions and Suggestions, 2 Cor. 12. 7. Paul had a messenger of Satan sent to buffet him, for which thing he prayed thrice, v. 8.

4. A Christian hath yet a fourth Enemy, That is Death. I should not have called Death an Enemy, but that I find the Apostle so calling it, 1 Cor. 15. 26. The last Enemy that is to be destroyed is Death. And indeed our flesh saith both concerning death, and Trials of afflictions leading to it; All these things are against us. There is a victorious Song which every good Christian must learn to sing, O Death where is thy sting? O hell where is thy Victory?

Thus

Thus now I have shewed you the Enemies to be fought in this good fight.

The word translated *fight* is a very Emphatical word *μαχηται*. It is the same word which is used, *Luk. 13. 24. Strive to enter in at the strait gate, and Col. 4. 12.* Where we translate it *Labouring fervently*, we translate it striving in *Col. 1. 29. fighting, John 18. 36. and 1 Tim. 6. 12.* The word seemeth to signify four things, 1. A *labouring against opposition*. A man cannot fight unless he hath an Enemy to fight against. What these Enemies are I have shewed you. 2. A *strong vehement, earnest labour*, where all the strength, and power of a man is put out, as is usual in all combates, and fightings, 3. An *inward labour*, from this word comes our English word *Agony* which we use to signify the conflict of the mind, and signifieth more then the Scuffling of the hands and more exterior members; Thus it signifieth, *Col. 4. 12. Labouring fervently for you in Prayer.* 4. It signifieth a *strife for mastery*, such as were the strifes in the *Roman games*, where the strife was who should overcome, and have the Victory. It is observed by *Aquinas* that the *fight* is called a *good fight* because it is for good things, and in a good manner and because it is difficult and the Apostle telleth us, that he who striveth is not crowned except he strive lawfully. Thus I have opened the first thing requisite for him who would have the Crown of Righteousness; he must fight the good fight.

2. The Second condition required of those, who expect this Crown of Righteousness

ness to be given them is *their finishing their course*. I have faith the Apostle finished *my course*, or *my race*. There is nothing more ordinary in Scripture, then for a *series* or *course* of actions to be called a *way*. Thus we read of the *way* of God, the way of the wicked and the way of the righteous. Holiness is called a *way*, the way of God's Commandments, and the exercises of Holiness are a Christian's *walking* or *running* in this way in the language of holy Writ. *John fulfilled his course*, Acts. 13. 25. Neither (saith our Apostle) do I count my life dear to me so that I may finish my course with joy. It is the same with that of our Saviour, John 17. *I have finished the work which thou hast given me to do*. This course must not be only entered, and some Progress made in it, but it must be finished and brought to an end. If any mans soul draw back Gods soul will have no pleasure in him. We must not only begin to run well, but we must take heed that nothing hindereth us, or turneth us back; it is he who endureth to the end, that shall be saved: He that draweth back doth it to destruction. Every Christian hath a double course, both must be finished.

1. The first is *his more general course*, common to him with all Christians; this lieth in the discharge of those duties which concern him as a Creature, with reference to God as his Creator, or as a Christian, with reference to Christ as his Redeemer. There is a great deal of such common duty, which belongeth to every one under these circumstances. Thus every

every one is obliged to the Commandments of God respecting all his creatures; the Commands of Christ respecting them as bought with a price. This is that course which *David* promisseth God to run, when God should enlarge his heart; and we are commanded to run, so as we may obtain, This *St. Paul* ran not incertainly, not as one that did beat the Air. This, to note the certainty and steadiness of our indeavours, is compared to a walk, to denote the *alacrity*, and *cheerfulness*, and *readiness* of our spirits to it, is compared to a Race; we are not to sit still and take our rest, nor to move slowly, but to run, making hast, and not delaying (as *David* speaks) to keep God's Precepts; pressing hard after God, as he in another place expresseth it; forgetting what is behind, and pressing forward to what is before, as *Paul* speaketh to his *Philippians*.

2. The Second is a Christians more particular course, which comprehendeth those actions of a man which are by the law of God his duty, as fixed in such, or such an Orb, and clothed with such or such circumstances. Thus *Pauls* course was his duty as an *Apostle*, and a *Minister of Jesus Christ*. Another mans course is his duty as a *Magistrate* or in any degree of Superiority to others, for there is no Relation but hath a particular duty annexed to it, and he must finish his course with reference to that. *Paul* here speaketh with reference to both, both his duties as a Christian and his duty as an *Apostle*. The Christians reward in heaven is sometimes compared to a Crown,

a *Crown*, and a *Victory*, to let us know that we must *fight* for it, sometimes to a *rest*, to teach us that we must *labour* for it, *Heb. 4. 11.* sometimes to a *mark*, a *goal* a *prize*, to let us know that we must *run* if we will obtain, and so *run* that we may *obtain*, *striving* after *Perfection* (as the Apostle speaketh, *Heb. 6. 1.*) the finishing of our course signify the two things. 1. *That we must do the whole work which God hath given us to do.* 2. *That we must not give over until it be all done,* we must not be weary of well doing, the promise of *Victory* is to him who *overcometh*, the promise of *reaping* is to him that is not weary, that fainteth not. Thus I have opened the 2d thing.

3. *Qu. What is meant by keeping the faith?*

The third thing is *keeping the faith*. I have (saith the Apostle) *kept the faith*. The term *faith* signifies several things in holy Writ. But there are three more famous, and usual acceptions of it.

1. Sometimes it is of the same import with *faithfulness*, *Rom. 3. 3.* *shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect?* That is, the *faithfulness of God*. Gods truth to his word, his *faithfulness* to his promise; so *Math. 23. 23.* where Christ chargeth the Pharisees for omitting the great things of the law Judgment Mercy, and Faith, while they were strict as to little things, but I shall not inlarge on this which I do not take to be any part of the sense of this Text.

2. *Faith* in Scripture doth very often signify the *Doctrine of faith*. Thus you read, *Acts*  
C 6. 7.

Acts 6. 7. ' 6. 7. a great company of the Priests were obedient  
 Rom. 12. 6. to the faith : That is, to the Doctrine of the  
 Gospel, the Doctrine of faith; so Rom. 12. 6. Let  
 us Prophecy, according to the Proportion of faith,  
 that is, of our knowledge of the Doctrine of faith.  
 I take this to be a great part of the sense of  
 these words; Paul elsewhere speaketh of the  
 Gospel as of a thing committed to his trust, now  
 faith he, I have kept the faith. He had kept his  
 own heart from erring, or warping as to it;  
 and he had kept it so as he had not suffered  
 corruptions as to it to break in, and prevail  
 upon those Churches, which he had planted,  
 or which had been under his watering, he  
 had kept it personally, so that in his own Judg-  
 ment he had not warped from it, and he had  
 kept it ministerially, keeping others in the faith  
 of the Gospel. This was a piece of his good fight  
 and a piece of his course as a Minister. And this  
 must be the business of a Christian, contend-  
 ing earnestly for the faith, which was once deliv-  
 ered to the Saints.

Jude 3.

3. Faith sometimes signifieth the *habit*, and  
*grace of faith*: That power of the Soul by which  
 it either giveth a fixed, and steady assent to  
 the Proposition of the Gospel : or receiveth,  
 committeth it self unto, resteth upon the  
 Person of the Mediator, which in Scripture  
 is called a *believing in him*, and in his name.  
 Thus the Apostle often useth it, Ro. 5. 1. Being  
 justified by faith we have peace with God, and so  
 in a multitude of other texts in holy Writ.  
 This that Christian that hopes for the Crown  
 of righteousness must also keep, he must dye in  
 the



*the faith, not only steadily assenting to the Doctrine of the Gospel, but in a steady affiance and recumbency upon the Lord Jesus Christ. This is now the third condition annexed to the obtaining of the Crown of righteousness. The 4th is a loving of Christs appearing. Here arise two Questions.*

1. *What appearing is here meant?*

2. *What is this to love the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ?*

The Original word here translated *appearing*, is *ἐμφάνεισθαι*, it signifieth a bright, and glorious appearance, it is used to expresse Christs first coming into the world, his manifestation in the flesh, -- *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Tim. 1. 10.* That first coming of his was attended with a great deal of glory, proclaimed by *Angels*, ushered in by a Messenger, sent as an harbinger before his face to *prepare his way*, declared by a new Star conducting the wise men from the east to *Hierusalem*, and then to *Bethlehem*, to inquire for him. But the glory of his first appearing was not like the glory which shall attend his second coming, when *he shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of an Archangel and with the trump of God, 1 Thessal. 4. 26. with ten thousands of his Saints, Jud. 14.* This is by the Apostle called a *glorious appearance as, 1 Pet. 1. 7. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of our Lord, and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Whether his first or second appearing be here meant I doubt. If it be understood of the first, the sense is much the same

## An Account of the

with that, *Rejoicing in Christ Jesus* in opposition to an *having a confidence in the flesh*, mentioned 3 *Philip.* 3. In this sense the loving his appearing, is the loving of him, as God *manifested in the flesh*, the accepting, and receiving of him, as our Saviour and the Mediator betwixt God and man, a breathing after him, and delighting in him; if we understand it of the latter, that *appearing* of Christ which is yet to come, we shall further open the duty by opening the 2d thing.

2. *What th's is to love his appearing.*

Love is nothing else but a pleasant motion of the Soul of man towards an Object, by which discerning some goodness and excellency in it, it takes a secret *complacency in the meditations, and speculations of it*: By desire moves toward it, if it hath not obtained a full fruition, and enjoyment of it; and rejoiceth, and delighteth in it if it have. A love towards the *second appearing of Jesus Christ* cannot at present discover it self in the imbraces of joy, and delight by which love in a Soul, discovers it self to an object to which it is united, but only. 1. *In desires after it* while the Soul crieth out, *I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ!* or rather *come Lord Jesus, come quickly.* 2. In a joy and delight arising from the certain belief, speculation, and contemplation of a thing yet future. There is a *rejoicing of hope* as well as of *fruition*, for hope (especially that hope which is the daughter of that faith which is the *evidence of things not seen*) giveth the Soul an *union* (though of the lowest degree) with its object,

ject and so is productive of a *proportionable joy*. Now my text saith, that for all those who thus fight the *good fight, finish their course, keep the faith*, and love the *appearance of Christ*, there is laid up a Crown of righteousness which the Lord, *the righteous judge*, will in that day give out. In that day, there is another little question what that day is.

1. In the day of death. Paul indeed had been speaking in the verse before of the *time of his departure*, which he had told us was *at hand*, and it is certain that at the day of death the Souls of believers do immediately pass into glory but yet this seemeth not to be the day here mentioned.

2. Rather the day of *Christs second appearing*, Emphatically called *that day*, because there never was nor ever will be any day like unto *that day*, the People of God shall in the day of their departure, be taken into glory, that is, their Souls shall, but their bodies rest in their graves until that day, so as the glory of the Saints before *that day*, the day of Christs coming to Judgment, shall be imperfect, but in that day they shall be Crowned.

If any man asketh from whence this shall be, the text gives us a double account of it.

1. In saying *it shall be given*, it is not the price of our combate, but it is the consequent of it from the free grace and gift of God. The gift of God is eternal life, Rom. 6. Fear not little flock (saith our Saviour) it is your Fathers will to give you a kingdom. My sheep saith

he, hear my voice, and follow *me*, and I give unto them eternal life. The Lord hath given Christ power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to whomsoever he pleased, *Joh. 17. 2.*

2. The text calls it a *Crown of Righteousness*, and saith *the righteous judge will give it*. God in all his acts of grace hath a care to declare his righteousness. In the justification of a sinner, he so declareth his grace that he also declares his righteousness, *Rom. 3. 25. 26.* speaking of Christ whom (saith he) God hath set forth to be a propitiation through his blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God: To declare, I say, at this time his Righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. So in the glorifying of Souls God will not act only as a gracious God, rich in mercy, communicating his goodness to his creatures, but he will also act as a righteous judge, in his giving out of the Crowns of glory he hath so ordered things that they are also crowns, as of glory, and favour, so of Righteousness. 1. Of Christ's Righteousness being the price, and purchase, and of the Fathers Righteousness as it is but a just and righteous thing, that he should satisfy the Covenant of Redemption and fulfil the eternal contract made with the Son of his love, and it is also a righteous thing that God should fulfil his promises of life, made to them who believe in him whom God hath sent, and be obedient to his Commandments.

1. The reasonableness and Righteousness of

of God in giving out of this crown then appears, *from Gods designation, Covenant, and promise.* The Crown of Righteousness is Christs to give, he hath purchased it, the Father hath given it to his disposal; and he hath so willed, that those who have it should first fight for it, first run the race and course which he hath in his word lined out for them. The promises of the *new* name, the white stone, the hidden manna are all made unto those who overcome, those who will obtain must run, 1 Cor. 9. 24.

2. There is a great relation between a *fight*, a *conquest*, and a *crown*; I observed to you before that the promises of Heaven are made to such as overcome, *Rev. 2. 17. ch. 3. 5. ch. 3. 12. ch. 3. 21. Rev. 21. 7.* There is a relation also betwixt running in a race, and getting of the prize, *Gal. 2. 2. Gal. 5. 7. 1 Cor. 9. 24.* Again, there is always a relation betwixt the means, and the end. The means in this case must not be natural but *instituted*, now these are the means which (as I have shewed you) God hath appointed in order to the obtaining of this blessed end. But I have spoken enough Doctrinally and shall now come to the application of this discourse.

This (as indeed all other Gospel Propositions) leads us to the consideration of the transcendent Love of God, to poor Creatures. 1. In providing for us a Crown. 2. Making it a Crown of Righteousness. 3. Laying it up for us. 4. Giving it to us.

1. In his providing for us a Crown. God in  
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Scripture is said to have prepared for us *Mansions, Rest, a better Country, a more induring Substance*, but this is not all, he hath also prepared for us a *Crown*. If those who are tickled with honour, and so enamoured with dignity, and preferment, as some men are, that they will go over hedge, and ditch, go through thick, and thin for it, had but faith as a grain of mustard seed to believe this notion of Heaven, the Kingdom of Heaven would again suffer violence, and the violent would storm it. The head of the meanest Saint in the day of Judgment, will be a *Crowned Head*. They have an *anointing* now, they will be *crowned then*, when they dye they shall enter into rest, but in the Resurrection they shall be crowned. O the Love of God to the Sons & Daughters of men! There is love in the providing a reward, so high, so great, so full a reward, and there is love in the proposing of this reward under this *notion*, as a bait to allure us who are tickled with honour, and prone to seek great things for our selves, to invite us first to seek the Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof. Who would labour for dust, and pebles, when he may labour for pearls, and those of great price? Who would sweat for a peny when he may for a little sweating have a crown? How should this notion of our future blessed state, send us all home this day with *David*, to sit down in our houses before the Lord and say, *Who are we O Lord God, that thou hast brought us hitherto? And this was yet a small thing.* Beloved! (saith the Apostle

1 Joh. 2. 27.

2 Sam. 7. 18.

1 John 2. 2.



Apostle) *now we are the Sons of God*, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be. In this day the Saints are called with an holy calling, they are justified, adopted, in that day they shall be crowned, that the Lord should not only speak of a *reward* for us, but of a *Crown*, such, so great, so noble a reward; nor is it an *earthly Crown* which is clogged with care, incumbred with thorns, but a *Crown of life*, a *Crown of glory*. Surely a less thing then a *Crown* might have been enough for the worms of the earth, for all the homage they do or can pay, all the duty they do or can do, for all they can suffer for Christ. This God must give as a King, the *reward* is too great for us to conceive, too great for us to receive, only it is not too great for God to give, which of us can think any more of merit when he heareth the reward of Heaven called a *Crown*? The notion of a *Crown* sets it above the Proportion of merit.

2. That the Lord should not only provide a *Crown* for us, but also make it a *Crown of Righteousness*, thereby giving us the greatest security imaginable for our receiving of it. Had it been only a *Crown of grace* and favour we might have doubted concerning it, whether it should have been ours or no. But it being a *Crown of Righteousness* we cannot doubt our one day wearing of it without calling the truth, and Righteousness of God in question.

3. It is a *Crown laid up, prepared for us*, saith our Saviour, *Math. 25. Laid up for us* (saith our

our Apostle) a *Crown* not in our own keeping, laid up in the *inalterable Counsels of God*, laid up in the *promises of the Gospel*, laid up in the *hands of Christ*. Gods People are kept by *faith through the power of God* for this *Crown*, and the *Crown* is in safe keeping for them, *John 10. 27, 28. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. God hath blessed them and they shall be blessed.*

4. And lastly to put us out of all doubt by reason of the disproportion of our works, when we have done our most to this reward it is said, *The righteous judge shall give it.* After all our *fighting the good fight*, running the race, keeping the faith, there is yet a room for a *gift* in the disposal of this *Crown* to the Saints; where there is no purchase nor any natural claim, what can give us a title to Heaven save only *gift* and *Righteousness*? If it be righteous for God to give it, because Christ hath purchased, and God hath promised, yet God was free as to the promise, and free in giving to us the purchase of another. It is a *Crown of gift*, free gift, though at the same time also it is but a *Crown of Righteousness* upon other considerations.

Use 2.

Secondly, this discourse will inform us, How vain the expectations of this *Crown of Righteousness* a great many nourish, nothing more discovereth a mans weakness, then vain, and ungrounded hopes, and expectations, building castles in the air (as we say) yet ad-

admitting the truth of the latter Proposition that the *Crown of Righteousness* shall be given to none but such as *fight the good fight*, such as *finish their course*, as *keep the faith*, as love the *appearance of Christ*; How vain must the hopes of the greatest number of expectants of this nature be? Would the generality of men and women in our Parishes admit us to come so near them, as to ask them, sufficiently possessed of this that they must dye, what they think will become of their Souls at death? And of their bodies & souls in the resurrection from the dead. Their reasonable nature will not suffer them to think of an annihilation in death; they cannot think that their souls melt into air, & abhor the thoughts of an eternal misery, so as certainly their answer would be, *We hope to be saved*, we hope for a *Crown of glory, of life, and immortality, which God will give us*; but can a *rush grow up without mire*? Or a *flag without water*, saith *Job*? He is a *righteous judge*, that giveth out this *Crown*, and the *Crown* it self must be a *Crown of Righteousness* as well as a *Crown of life, glory and immortality*. It is given out as a *Crown of Christs Righteousness* to those who are clothed with it; what is this to Souls out of Christ? To Souls that have not believed, that so his *Righteousness* might be imputed to them for *Righteousness*, to those who are not by faith united to Christ? Admit it to be the *Crown* that is the *free reward* of mans *Righteousness*, his holy, and pure and sincere, though not perfect conversation, what claim can they lay to it, that live impure,

pure, unholy, filthy and unrighteous conversations? How shall the Crown ( which is the *Crown of Righteousness* ) be given to him that is unrighteous? Admit it to be the Crown of Gods *Righteousness* ( that is, his *faithfulness* to his word, and promise ) how shall it be given to those, to whom God hath in his whole book not made so much as one promise of any such thing, nay against whom he hath denounced many threatnings as to the contrary ( as to the fulfilling of which his truth is as much concerned as it is as to his promises? He hath promised it, and his word is a sure word, he cannot as to it lie, he cannot repent, but this promise is to those that *fight the good fight, that finish their course, that keep the faith, &c.*

Ah how many are there that fight indeed, but is it the good fight? They are fighters against God, opposers of his interest, they would ( if possible ) root the very name of God, and profession of Godliness out of the world. They have such an antipathy to piety, that (as they say of the *Basilisk* ) it hath such an enmity to man that it will fly upon his picture: so they have such an enmity to Christ, and holiness that they fly upon any Persons, or things who have any thing of Christs Image and Superscription upon them: others are *fighters*, great disturbers of humane societies with their quarrels. But now for the *good fight* which is to be managed against our passions & exorbitant affections, and all the motions of the Soul, that are contrary to the will of God, how few of those are to be found that fight  
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this fight? How few are those that will manage an opposition for the glory of God against the *temptations of the world*? How few are there that can glory in this, that they have finished either their more general course as Christians, or more particular Course as Christians under such or such circumstances. How full is the world of those who have yet their first step to take in the way of Gods Commandments, their life is a meer walking in the counsels, and Imaginations of their own hearts, a meer gratification of their sensitive appetite, not only as moving contrary to the law of Christ, but to the very law of reason? Living beneath the better sort of heathens. How many more, whose only business is to heap up gold as dust, and silver as thick clay, but the way of Religion and holiness they have not known? How few are there that mind the duties of their particular relation, but as they use their own Souls as if they were the meer condiment of their bodies, so they behave themselves to their Wives, Husbands, and Children, as if they had no trust of their Souls committed to them. How many that have lost the faith first delivered to the Saints, and are fallen into pernicious and damnable heresies, making Shipwreck both of faith, and a good conscience? Can these men possibly *love the appearance of Jesus Christ*?

But leaving others, let us take the advantage of this discourse to enter into our own Souls and to commune with our own hearts, Uic 3.  
inquiring

inquiring whether we be such Persons as when we shall be ready to dye, & shall by any Providence of God be made apprehensive that the *time of our departure is at hand*, shall be able to say that *henceforth there is laid up for us a Crown of Righteousness, which the righteous Judge shall in that day give out to all such, as love the appearance of our Lord, and Saviour Jesus Christ*. To satisfy us as to these things, we have heard in the explication of this text that we have several things to inquire upon, they may be reduced to six or seven heads.

1. *What opposition we have made to the carnal desires and motions of our own hearts contrary to the revealed will of God*. You shall observe, that a sinful walking in holy Writ is very ordinarily expressed by a walking *according to the counsels, and imaginations of our own hearts*; so contrary are the natural desires, counsels, and imaginations of the heart of man to the revealed will of God, there is no surer sign of a wicked man, then for him to walk after his own imaginations or for him (to use *Jobs* expression) to suffer *his heart to walk after his Eyes*. Hence *self-denial* is by our Saviour made the condition, and character, of being one of his disciples, and we are often in Scripture Commanded to *mortify our members, and the deeds of our bodies*. This kind of conversation, which lyeth in the gratifying of our sensitive appetites, is the *broad way*, in which many walk, but it is the high way to eternal destruction.

2. *What opposition we have made to the world, ei-  
ther*



ther the men of the world, or the things of it, attempting either to frown, or flatter us out of the duty which we owe unto God. He who is at the worlds beck cannot be at the Command of Christ. If we be the Servants of men we cannot be the Servants of God. As Christ pleased not himself, so neither did he please the men of the age wherein he lived in their oppositions to the will of his Father. It is most certain that the generality of the men of the world love no Child of God as such, they are two different seeds betwixt which there ever was, and ever will be an enmity. If they take us by the chin, and kiss us, it is but that they may have the better opportunity to smite us under the fifth rib. The truth is their open war is better than their dissembled amity, but that also requires in us wisdom, when to oppose so as not to suffer as evil doers, and courage and resolution that we may be able to stand.

3. *How we walk as to our more general conversation.* It is certainly a true saying, *grande est Christianum esse, non dici*. It is a great thing, not to be called, but to be a Christian, and in Christianity, *Tantum es, quantum agis*, a man is just so much as he acteth in an uniform obedience, having a regard to all the Commandments of God. He that wilfully breaketh any of Gods Commandments is guilty of all, for there is the same reverence due to God as to one Precept as unto another. We have also further to enquire,

4. *How we discharge the duties of our particular*

*lar Relations.* Not only how we run that race, which we have to run in Common with others, but that particular course which God hath set us, how we have managed our duties as parents, Children, Husbands, Wives, Masters, Servants, Magistrates or Subjects, Ministers or People, &c.

5. *What steadiness wee keep as to the faith once delivered to the Saints,* It is true every warping in opinion from the truth is not damnable, but we must take heed of warping in such points as a warping in is inconsistent with the exercise of *repentance* and *faith*. I will not undertake punctually to determine what things are to be believed upon pain of damnation, but I am sure every one that doth not *repent* and *believe in*, or close with the Lord Jesus Christ is in an ill condition, and from thence it follows, that such opinions drank in, as hinder the exercise of *repentance* or *faith*, must needs be pernicious unto Souls.

6. *What particular faith and dependance we keep up in God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.* The Scriptures are so full of texts giving testimony to the necessity of faith in Christ in order to eternal salvation, that I need not instance in many, see *John* 3. 18, 36. the Scripture faith expressly, that *he that believeth not shall be damned*, God hath made an inseparable connexion betwixt faith in the Mediator, in him whom God hath sent, and eternal life and salvation; this indeed cannot be without obedience, but faith and obedience are two things, and must neither be separated, nor confounded.

7. Lastly,

7. Lastly, *What love have we to the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ?* How Christs second appearance is the object of our love, and wherein our love to it is discernable, I have already opened.

Fourthly, This notion affords a great deal of consolation to every good Christian, and that in two cases. use 4.

1. *Concerning all the labours, & difficulties, & pressures of this life.* The good Christian you have described in the text. He is one *who fighteth the good fight*, who not only runneth but finisheth his course, who not only receiveth but keepeth the faith, &c. The labours of such persons, their difficulties, their pressures are usually not a few, not light, but yet they are not such but a Crown, a Crown of life, and glory, will compensate. Let them therefore keep their Eye upon the recompense of reward, Jacobs prospect of a Rachel made his fourteen years hard service seem to him but as a few days. What should the prospect of this mighty reward, this glorious crown do? The Apostle having his thoughts upon the exceeding weight of glory, calls the afflictions of this life light and momentary. Let this crown promised in the text alleviate all our troubles, if we suffer from God, or for God, how little must it be to him that considers he shall also be glorified with Christ?

Secondly, *It relieveth us against all our doubts, and fears, about our eternal state,* the promise is made to pious affections and actions, not to spiritual enjoyments; a man may love both the

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first, and second appearance of Christ, he may fight the good fight, finish his course, keep the faith, and yet walk in the dark and see no light, but be troubled with his own dark, and melancholick thoughts, molested with Satans temptations, want the witnessings of the Spirit with his Spirit. The promise is not made to those who here enjoy much of God, but to those who love God, to those, who do, and suffer much for God. We have therefore to uphold our hopes nothing to inquire upon, but the faithful discharge of our duty, and then to believe that he is faithful who hath promised.

Use 3.

Fifthly, Let this ingage us all to the duty of the text. Let others be ingaged in the *bad fights* of the world, let them if they will be found *fighters against* God, against his truths, ways, ordinances, people, his interest and whole concern in the world, let others be finishing their courses of sin and wickedness till their sins being finished shall bring forth death. Let others be ingaged in the feuds, and quarrels of the world. This Sirs is not your fight, this is not the *good fight*, this is not *your course*, it is not that for which God sent you into the world for, not the work which he hath given you to do, let others who have begun well in all appearance, be *weary, & faint, & turn back with the dog to the vomit, & the swine to the wallowing again in the mire*, remember you that God hath promised you shall reap if you faint not.

1. Let me speak first to such as are strangers to God, and hold up this Crown (this glo-

glorious Crown) to reasonable Souls; while I found a retreat to them from that bad fight wherein they are engaged, did ever any man fight against God and prosper? How happy might you be If you would be persuaded to understand your true enemies, and to engage against the *world*, the *flesh* and the *Devil*; if you that are fighting for your lusts, and for the Devil, would turn and fight against those lusts which war against the Soul; will all the victories which you can get over the people and interest of God in the world, or over your Brethren, bring you to this Crown of Righteousness? Will your eager pursuit of the world, and out running of others in worldly business and concerns (think you) bring you to it? If not, cease that race, and turn into the right path as of Gods Commandments, run that race the winning of which will bring you to this prize, why should you spend your strength for nought, and your time for that which will not profit you in your latter end?

2. Let what you have heard *engage you who have begun well to go on. If the Righteous man forsake his Righteousness, & Commits iniquity his righteousness shall never be remembered, but he shall dye in the iniquity which he hath committed.* O let not your hands be weary with holding up the Spiritual weapons, nor your feet be weary of running the spiritual race, & do not forget your particular course; you can hardly be good Christians if you in some tolerable measure answer not the duties of your particular Relation. God hath set all of us in some particular Relation



or other, scarce any amongst us but have more then the charge of our own Souls upon us, some of us are set in *Conjugal Relations*, some in *Parental Relations*, some in a *Despotic Relation* as Governours of Servants. O let us be all able to say, As to these *we have finished our course*, we have done the work which (as to them) God hath given us to do, we shall find it an hard matter cheerfully to look upon the day of our departure as at hand, or to love, or cheerfully think upon the appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, till this be done.

*Use 6.* In the last place, This notion affords us a great deal of *Consolation* to those who are mourners for their near and dearest Relations; and are not mourners without hope; I must confess there are some mourners, to whom something may be said to satisfy them, from the *Revelation of the good, and irresistible will of God*, and such other *Topicks*, but little to comfort them concerning those that are gone. But if any have lost an Husband, a Wife, a Parent, a Child, a Friend of whom they can judge that while they were alive, *They fought the good fight, and finished their course, and kept the faith, and loved the appearance of our blessed Lord.* We have no reason to mourn, there is a *Crown of Righteousness*, which the *Righteous Lord* hath in part already set upon their heads (their Souls are in *Abrahams Bosom*) and with which he will further incompass their heads, dignify both their Souls and Bodies in that day, that glorious day, in the expectation



pectation of which we live, when he shall come to judge the quick and the dead, and this leadeth me to a more particular discourse for the end, for which I have this day turned out of the common road of my discourse to take notice of Gods Providence to us in taking from us a Servant of his in the great work of the Gospel: Who hath left a *Widow* without an Husband, a Child without a Parent, alas! that I cannot also say a particular flock without a *Pastor*, but the whole flock of Christ I can say he hath left deprived of one labourer more, and that in a time, when the *Harvest truly is great, and the labourers too too few*. But it is no part of love for our own good to envy the more exceeding good, & happiness of our friends, & our sorrow for him as a *publick loss*, is much alleviated, by that useless condition (as to publick service) into which the wisdom of the Divine Providence had brought him for some years, before it pleased God to take him to himself.

His conversation from his youth was better known to many of you then to my self, he being born, and bred up amongst you, I shall limit my discourse concerning him by my Text, having nothing in further design then to shew you, that we who believe *that there is a Crown of Righteousness laid up for some*, which the Righteous Judge will one day give out to all such as love his appearance, have no reason for any dissatisfaction at this dispensation of Divine Providence, because we have

reason to hope that he was one of those *who fought the good fight, who finished his course, who kept the faith, who loved the appearance of our Lord Jesus.*

I. *For fighting the good fight* : It respecteth the *World, the Flesh, or the Devil* ; as to the *World*, there was none who knew him, who can accuse him of any pursuit of it, none who saw not his neglect of it, he contented himself with a competency of it, and could not be tempted to mend his commons in it, by a compliance in any thing which he judged sinful, he was no man of pleasure, none of those who sought great things for himself. He did not neglect the work of the *Ministry* while he had a liberty to exercise it, and withal to exercise (what he judged) a good conscience, but when he saw he could not do that, the profits of such service was no temptation to him, he rather chose to live upon the little God had given him, and occasionally to preach the Gospel where he had an opportunity offered for near twenty years before God took him from us (though indeed for 5 or 6 of those years) he was not fit for any publick service of that nature. *The good fight with the flesh* is a more secret combat, of which we can make no judgment, but from a mortified conversation to sensible satisfactions, as to which I need say nothing to you, you know how he walked in, and out before you, dying daily to the contentments of this life, and bringing his body under, and keeping it in subjection. But it was his  
managery

managery of this good fight with the *Grand Adversary* that was to us (to me at least) the most perspicuous, and as to which I was the most competent witness, in regard of my frequent converse with him. It was in the year 1673. (if I remember right) when it pleased God to take from him his only Son, a Child in which he much delighted, and whose life (probably by giving him some diversion) kept him from those depths of *Melancholy*, into which he soon after fell, and continued to his dying day, though under some different circumstances. It were infinite to recount all his *doubts* and *fears*, some respecting his *Spiritual* and *Eternal State*: Some, with reference to the *Actions of his life*, so as there was not the most lawful action of his life, which he was not at one time, or other questioning the lawfulness of. He had the assistance of Divines, whose success with him, was but what is usual in those cases, they could easily silence him, and answer the Objections he made against himself, and give him a little relief at present, but his troublesome thoughts would return again, and renew upon him; yet we observed God blessing our indeavours so far, as to drive the *Enemy* from one *Post* to another. But still there came on a *new supply* from those *Principalities*, with which he was engaged, and this continued so long, that his life grew a burden to him, and he seemed weary of it, not desirous to live alwaies, when in living he did not live. His Adversary brought forth all

those usual *fiery Darts*, which he commonly throweth at persons under his circumstances. *Temptations to Blasphemous thoughts, Despair, Self-Murder*; as to the first and second, it so far pleased God to bless our *Brotherly assistances* to him, advantaged by his own knowledge of the things of God, and acquaintance with the *Covenant of Grace*, (which he was observed almost always to make the subject of his Sermons in later years) that he was not many months in those combates; but under the latter he laboured some years, indeed so long, as in the whole course of my Ministry, I never knew any who was infested with those *Temptations*, but was overthrown by them (if they continued) in much shorter times. He hath often affrighted his nearest Relation, and my self, with telling us. *He must put an end to his days, he was not able to bear the impetus of the Temptation.* Both my self and others would speak what we judged proper in the cause, and for a time were successful to divert him, but the *Tempter* came on again, and that with that *violence* as I scarce ever knew, I learned in my daily converse with this good man, the great advantage which *true faith* in any gives a Minister of the Gospel in such an hour of *temptation*: over what he hath towards one who hath no such root of Grace. In my discourses with him, I used a much different method from what others would have thought proper in the case, and in the midst of these *Paroxysms*, commonly made the *eternal misery of damned Souls*.

Souls, and the desperate state of persons dying in the commission of known sins the subjects of my discourse; Knowing that if God would bless my discourses, to revive *his faith* in such Revelations of Holy Writ, I should countermine his adversary, whose design was to blow up his Soul, by the hopes of a freedom from a temporary affliction and misery. In the mean time, many prayers were put up to God for him, many were made to God with him, and himself (if out of his bed) was almost always alone upon his knees, such was his condition, that his friends durst not have trusted him the twentieth part of that time alone, but they knew he was not alone while he was with God, and they found that he was safe, because in his company. After the spending of some years in this degree of deep affliction, it pleased God in a great degree to rebuke the *Tempter*, that although his bodily distemper yet continued, and by this time it had bred more, yet his mind was much more free from these desperate Temptations, and *impetuous assaults*, that if at all any thing of them returned at any time, yet they were not a continual dropping upon his Soul; thus he *fought the good fight*, and indeed in this piece of it was more a Conquerour than I ever knew any who was so long engaged in it, and at last died the ordinary death of men, quietly in his Bed, surrendring his Soul into the hands of him that gave it.

2 For the *finishing of his course*; how he walked in, and out before you, I need not tell



tell you, you knew the man, and observed his conversation. For the duties of his Relation, as a *Minister*, while he had a *publick liberty*, he was no indiligent Preacher; when he was restrained as to that, you were also some witnesses of his readiness to that work. For his *Domestick Relations*, let his Widow rise up and call him blessed, let his Daughter praise him. He spent no small proportion of time in opening Scripture, and praying with his Family, and other exercises of Religion proper to a Family. He rather erred by excess, then by a defect in those exercises.

3. As to his *keeping the faith*. As he was known to all that conversed with him to be sound in the *Doctrine of faith*. So two things spake the exercise of the habit of that Grace in him.

1. *He was much in prayer*. It was almost his whole work, for some years before he died, he did little else but read and pray. When he could no longer *Pray* himself, he would continually be solliciting others to the performance of it, and when he hardly regarded either Wife or Child coming to him, yet he was so regardful of this, that he missed *Prayer*, if at any time any of us had come to him, and gone away, having not prayed with him.

2. *Much holiness speaketh faith*. His scrupulosity in his actions, lest he should by any of them sin against God, was such as indeed was a great part of his Affliction. Indeed the latter part of his life being very *Melancholick*,



*cholick*, and that disposing him to too many fears, and God having for some weeks before he died, allowed him but a very uncertain use of his reason, and much deprived him also of a liberty of speech, we had not that *lightsome* evidence of his desire to be dissolved, which we might have expected from such a conversation. But his quiet bearing Gods severe hand upon him, his free submission to his will without any murmuring, or repining, added to the former spending of his life in a constant preparation for death, may satisfy us, that he was one *who loved the appearance of our Lord Jesus*. Now I say, if we have a sufficient evidence to hope, that he was indeed one *who fought the good fight, who had finished his course, who kept the faith, and who loved the appearance of our Lord Jesus*; what reason have we to mourn? Nay, if we consider what a man of griefs and sorrows he was in his latter time, what an ill habit of body he had contracted, what a variety of diseases he was incumbred with, and how improbable it was that by the use of any art, his body should be recovered to a state of comfort to himself, or usefulness to others. We have great cause to rejoice in hope. That he is crowned with that *Crown of Righteousness*, which the Righteous God hath prepared, laid up, and will give out to those who love his appearance.

In ordinary cases where there is no cause of sorrow from a reflection upon the eternal state of the deceased, yet there may be  
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some cause of sorrow upon the account of the *Churches loss*; and never was there a greater cause of mourning for Godly Ministers, then at this day. We have cause upon all such losses, to cry out, as *Psal. 12. 1. Help Lord ! for the Godly man ceaseth, and the faithful fail from the children of men :* But in the present case we have not that cause. God by his Providence had made him dead to us, before he died, and except in a miraculous way, we could not reasonably have expected a Resurrection, (a recovery I mean to any degree of usefulness.)

So then if there remaineth no cause of mourning, either from the consideration of our friends eternal state, or our own loss, What remains but that we should lay our hands upon our mouths, or if we will open them, bless God who hath granted us to see him (after so long a scuffle with the great Enemy of Mankind ) *depart in peace ;* that he might see the Lords Salvation, and be *ever with the Lord*, as the Apostle expresseth the state of those that *sleep in Jesus* in another life. I shall conclude, as the Apostle doth that Chapter, *wherefore comfort your selves with these words.*

S E R.

## SERMON III.

Deuteronomy 8. 18.

--- *For it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth.*

**T**His fifth Book of *Moses* is called *Deuteronomy*, qu. *ἑκτον* & *νόμος*: a second law, because it for the most part containeth a repetition of the law of God, formerly given unto this people by *Moses*; *Moses* having in the former Chapter given them an account of some precepts that God formerly delivered to them, he here presseth them to obedience, and to make reflections upon what God had done for them, he declareth a great tenderness for this people, who had been brought up by him, and lived upon his hand, and an exceeding jealousy, lest when they came into the land of *Canaan*, they should forget the great God who had done so much for them, and lest they should say in their hearts, my power, and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth, but (saith he in the words I have read unto you,) *Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth.*

The Doctrines of the Text are two.

Doct. 1. *That it is the Lord who giveth unto people a power to get wealth.*

Doct.

*A word to the Rich,*

**Doct. 2.** *That the consideration of this should oblige men when they have gotten estates, not to forget, but to remember the Lord their God.*

**Prop.** *That it is the Lord who giveth unto a people a power to get wealth. There is nothing in the Doctrine that needeth any explication; we all know what is meant by wealth, my whole business will lie upon the demonstration of this truth, that it is the Lord that giveth men power to get wealth, and to shew what influence God hath upon men, as to their gaining of outward estates, 1 Sam. 2. 7. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich, Eccl. 6. 2. A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour --- chap. 9. 11. --- the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; & 2. By way of Application, to shew what influence this meditation should have upon us; I shall spend all my time in answering these two Questions.*

**Qu. 1.** *What influence hath God upon men as to their gaining or keeping their outward estate?*

All wealth and outward estate, cometh to a man, by inheritance, or marriage, or by gift, or by labour; let me shew you a little the influence God hath upon all these. I will joyn the two first together.

1. It is the Lord that maketh Heirs, and who maketh Matches; we have two Proverbs in this case, which are very true, we use to say, *God maketh Heirs, and Matches are made in heaven*, both are true; the Woman marieth the Husband, and the Husband mar-

marrieth that Wife which God hath created for him, and that man inheriteth the estate which God had created for him.

Let us consider the influence the Lord hath upon *Heirs*, and this will easily be confessed by whosoever acknowledgeth that the issues of life and death are from the Lord, *the fruit of the Womb is from the Lord*, and the issues of life and death are in the hand of the Lord; you shall find an expression to this purpose, *Mic. 1. 15. Yet will I bring an heir unto thee, Oh inhabitant of Maresha; Maresha was a City in Judah*, it is mentioned also, *Josh. 15. 44. Abraham told God, Gen. 15. 3. One born in his house was his heir, God tells him, v. 4. --- This shall not be thine heir, one born of thy bowels, shall be thy heir, Psal. 30. 22. For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth*— Sometimes a handmaid is heir to her Mistress, which is one of the three things for which the earth groaned, and which it could not bear (saith Solomon) *Prov. 34. 23. One may be heir to his enemy by natural death*, oftentimes it so happeneth; at what a distance doth God sometimes throw an estate, both in a direct line, and in a collateral line? who would have said that *Mephibosheth* should have been heir to his Grandfather *Saul*, as, *2 Sam. 9. 7. And David said unto him, fear not, for I will surely shew thee kindness, for Jonathan thy Fathers sake, and will restore thee all the Land of Saul thy Father*— or who would have thought the Israelites should have been heirs unto the Canaanites? It is the Lord that thus

thus giveth a power to get wealth; the influence of God upon conjugal affection is also as strange. I know nothing wherein the strange power and providence of God is more seen, then in uniting the affections of that man and woman together, whom he hath ordained each for other, a man or woman shall bestow their Estates upon persons whom they never knew, never heard of; nay, possibly upon those against whom they were prejudiced; who would have thought *Esther* (a person of mean and obscure extraction) should have been *Ahasuerus* his Queen; or that *Ruth* should have Married *Boaz*.

2. *It is the Lord who raiseth up friends*; this is another fountain head of riches; he it was that gave the *Israelites* favour in the sight of the *Egyptians*, *Exod. 11. 3.* And the Lord gave the People favour in the sight of the *Egyptians*; He gave *Joseph* favour in the sight of *Pharaoh*, *Acts 7. 10.* --- and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of *Pharaoh King of Egypt*--- *Dan. 1. 9.* Now God had brought *Daniel* into favour and tender love--- who so lightly observeth the course of the world, will find this verified every day, you may see friends raised up of strangers, yea, of enemies, even to the amazement of them who behold them, but there is yet another fountain of wealth, and that is *labour and industry*, *Pro. 10. 4.*--- the hand of the diligent maketh rich. But you must take in another Text. *v. 22.* The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich--- and to this purpose, let us consider what influence



ence God hath upon that. In the third place therefore,

3. *It is the Lord that enclineth our minds unto business*, and to that particular employment which bringeth in our estate; I say it is the Lord that enclineth the mind to business, and directeth the mind in business.

1. I say *he enclineth the mind to business*; you see some men are of dull, sluggish and lazy spirits, fit for no business, nor do they mind any, but others are men of activity, they are never well but when their hands are full of employment; who is it that hath made this difference in the spirits of men; have they not all Souls of the same species; have they not all bodies, though not of the same strength, yet of the same mould? this is the Lord.

2. *It is the Lord that directeth a mans mind and inclination to this or that particular employment*: there are some ways of employment in the world, that are of more gain & advantage then others; some trades that are poorer, some richer; some that bring in great, some smaller returns; whence cometh it that this man is directed to choote a meaner, & poorer trade that bringeth in little return another to a trade that bringeth in greater, is it not from the Lord? That hath this influence upon the heart of man and disposeth, it which way soever he will.

3. *It is the Lord that giveth dexterity in business*; you observe in the world, that some men are more dexterous and happy in their employment

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ment by far then others are, they can do more in their business, they can do it to better advantages; whence is this? see but one instance, *Exo. 31. 2. See, I have called by name Bezaleel, the Son of Uri, the Son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. v. 3. And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship. v. 4. To devise cunning works, to work in Gold, and Silver and in Brass. So add v. 6. — In the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom; again, Exod. 35. 35. Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work—* Hence you may observe in almost all employments a sagacity given to one which he cannot communicate to another, so that the power and influence of God is evidently seen; you may observe that a power to get wealth doth very much depend, not only upon the kind of the employment wherein a man is engaged, but upon the wisdom and cunning of the man, upon his dexterity and sagacity in his employment; now all this is from the Lord.

4. *It is the Lord who giveth success in business;* there is nothing more ordinary in the world, then to find two men, whose profession, trade and way of living possibly is the same; whose industry and diligence is as much as can be imagined, equal whose wisdom and cunning also is not much unlike, yet the one thriveth, and groweth rich, the other doth not, the one vendeth his commodities, and maketh safe and great returns, the

the other cannot vend his commodities, he cannot secure his return; whence is this but from the Lord? It is the Lord who maketh our way prosperous, *Deut. 2. 7. For the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand— It is God that bleffeth in the city, and bleffeth in the field, Deut. 28. 3. —Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, saith the Devil to Job, ch. 1. 10.* Hence the Psalmist teacheth us to pray unto God, to prosper the works of our hands unto us.

5. Lastly, *It is the Lord who keepeth off those things from us which would make us poor.* Riches are subject to accidents; a mans getting an estate dependeth upon anothers keeping his estate; the fire may burn, the Thief may break through and steal, Ships may be broken at Sea; infinite many accidents may happen, and we daily see and hear of accidents that happen to the ruine and impoverishing of men, and is not thy estate as subject to accidents; who is it that keepeth the fire from thee which consumeth thy Neighbour? and who keepeth the Thief from thee, who plundereth thy Neighbour, and leaveth him nothing? that upholdeth the estate of him who dealeth with thee, while he letteth the estate of another man who dealeth with another to sink? who can ascribe this to any thing but to the influence that God hath upon the world? Now all this justifieth this truth, that it is the Lord who giveth power to get wealth. I shall add no more in the explication of this Doctrine; I shall spend the remain-

*A word to the Rich,*

ning part of my time in the application of it; I shall apply this to the two sorts of people that divide the world.

1. *To such as are poor and mean in the world.*
2. *To those that are rich.*

Use 1. Let me speak unto such to whom the Lord hath not given a power to get wealth; that they would be content to eye the will and good pleasure of God concerning them; some of you are no heirs, you have not been enriched by any matches, you have not been made rich by friends, you have been laborious, but it hath not pleased God to bless the works of your hands; yet be content.

1. Consider, *It is the dispensation of the Lord*; thou dost not thrive, because it pleaseth not God to give thee a power to get wealth; we ought in every thing to be satisfied with the will of God: the earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof, and God may do with his own what he pleaseth; if he will give much to one, and little to another, or something to one, and nothing to another, he doth thee no wrong at all; thou hast therefore no reason to murmur, no reason to repine against him; especially considering what I shall further add.

2. Consider, *Wealth is none of Gods Covenant Mercies*; there were two outward afflictions, which to the Jews were far more justifiable causes of disturbance, than they are to Christians, *Poverty* and *Barrenness*; the reason was, because the promises of God to the Jews ran much upon outward things; it

it followeth after the words of the Text,  
 ---For it is he that giveth thee power to get  
 wealth, that he may establish his covenant, which  
 he sware unto thy fathers, as at this day. But  
 the new Covenant reacheth most unto Spiritu-  
 al mercies, Jer 32. 40. And I will make an  
 everlasting covenant with them, that I will not  
 turn away from them, to do them good, but I will  
 put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not  
 depart from me.

3. Consider, Oftentimes a power to get  
 wealth, prejudiceth us in our priviledge to ob-  
 tain, and our duty to act grace, James 2. 5.  
 Hearken my beloved brethren, hath not God  
 chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and  
 heirs of the Kingdom--- Therefore the A-  
 postle Paul gave it in charge, 1 Tim. 6. 17.  
 That the rich should not be high-minded, but  
 fear; Our Saviour doth pronounce a woe to  
 them that are rich, Luke 6. 24--- For you have  
 received your consolation; it must be under-  
 stood of them that are not rich towards God;  
 but only lay up treasures for themselves. So  
 St. James, Jam. 1. 9. would have the Brother  
 of low degree rejoice that he is exalted; he  
 would also have the rich rejoice. v. 10. In  
 that he is made low--- but I shall inlarge no  
 further upon this branch of application, but  
 come to that which is more proper, and speak  
 a word to those that are rich.

Exhort. 2. Is it the Lord who giveth you  
 power to get wealth? Then remember the  
 Lord your God, who hath given you power to get  
 wealth; It is the Exhortation of the Text,

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upon

*A word to the Rich,*

upon which I shall enlarge a little. *Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, who giveth thee power to get wealth; this term remember, is a very comprehensive word; Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; it is also used in many other texts; I must therefore open this generally, and shew you,*

1. What-duty this calleth to you for, in reference to your getting wealth.

2. What duty it calleth to you for, when you have gotten it.

In reference to the getting of your wealth,

1. *That you would apply your self to the getting of wealth in the Lords way.*

By the Lords way, I mean two things.

1. An honest course of life justifiable unto God.

2. A managing this honest course in an honest manner.

Apply your selves and your children to the getting of wealth in an honest course of life; I shall not here undertake to determine concerning Trades, which are honest, which are dishonest; but there are two sorts of Trades, or Professions, or ways of life, which I shall not commend, nor should chuse.

1. Such as serve meerly to maintain Superstition or Idolatry.

2. Such as serve meerly for *Idleness & Luxury.*

1. Such as serve meerly for Superstition and Idolatry, like the Silver-Smith, whose craft was to make shrines for *Diana*; I remember



member *Tertullian* inveighing against Idolaters, maketh all makers of *Idols* and *Statues*, to be guilty of the same sin with them that worship them.

2. There is another sort of Trades that serve meerly for *Luxury* and *Idleness*; such kind of ways of living as these, are by no means to be chosen, because we cannot expect that the Lord should in them, with his blessing give us power to get wealth.

2. It calleth to you for the managing of your callings in an honest manner; that is, in short, with truth and justice, *Prov. 21. 6.* The getting of treasures by a lying tongue, is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death. *David* prayeth, that the Lord would remove from him the way of lying— a lying tongue is one of those things which God hateth; and again, *Pro. 12. 22.* Lying lips are abomination to the Lord

3. It calleth to all you that are employed in getting wealth, to manage all your conversation in such a course of religion, as you may expect Gods blessing to go along with you, especially it calleth to you for prayers; it is the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich; who can expect the blessing of the Lord in the day, that doth not beg it in the morning, and in the evening; he that chooseth to live as if there were no God in the world, what wonder is it, if God leaveth him to take his course, that he shall live as if there were no God in the World, if he will not live as to duty, as if there were a God in the world, what wonder is it if the Lord leaveth him

## A word to the Rich,

to live so as to his mercy, as if there were no God in the World.

Obj. But may some say, do not we see that many grow rich in the world, that yet live without a God in the world, making no conscience of such a course of Religion as you prescribe?

Sol. I answer, it is one thing for God to give a power, another thing for men to have a permission; that Text is worth your noting, *Prov. 10. 22. The blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it.* There is a great deal of difference in Gods giving outward blessings, and much lyeth, whether he giveth them with his blessing, or with his curse; it is said of the *Israelites*, *That the Lord gave them quails, and while the flesh was betwixt their teeth, the anger of the Lord smoked against them.* God gave the *Israelites* a King in his wrath; & so the Lord sometimes giveth riches and honour; but the blessing of the Lord addeth no sorrow with it, There was a great difference betwixt the riches of *Solomon*; and the riches of *Gehazi*; no man can expect the blessing of the Lord upon his riches and getting wealth, without this course of life which I have directed.

Qu. 2. What duty doth this call to us for, when we have gotten our wealth?

I answer, it calleth to you for an acknowledgment of this truth; in such a using of your estates, as you may thereby testifie, that you do not say that you by your own hand have gotten this wealth, but the Lord gave you power to get it.

I. It

1. It calleth to you for a cordial acknowledgment.

2. It calleth to you for a verbal acknowledgment.

3. It calleth to you for a real acknowledgment.

1. It calleth to you for a cordial acknowledgment.

1. Take heed your hearts be not lifted up, *Deut. 14. 17. Then thine heart be lifted up— And thou say in thy heart, my power, and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.* We are ready to be lifted up, for any thing that we have more then others; but consider what the Apostle saith, *Who hath made thee to differ, and who hath given thee power to get wealth; what reason hast thou to be proud?*

2. Take heed that in your hearts you acknowledge God the donor and author of it; do not say that by your own power, and by your own wisdom you have gotten this wealth, the Lord delighteth to do good, but he also loveth to be acknowledged and owned, then is God honoured when you acknowledge the mercy which you have to be received from him.

3. In your hearts acknowledge Gods mercy, and give him thanks, keep your Souls in a thankful frame, that when you look upon the houses which you did not build, and your fields which you did not plant; your Soul may presently be lifted up to Heaven, and say, *God I thank thee, thou hast given me land for which I did not labour, and houses which I did not build.* Josh. 24. 13.

4. Be

*A word to the Rich,*

4. Be thinking in your hearts, what you should do for God ; thus was *David*, *What shall I render unto the Lord ? I will take the cup of Salvation, and praise his holy name.*

2. Give the Lord a verbal acknowledgment.

1. Be not ashamed to own before men that God is gracious ; I have often observed, and that not without some blushing, that even good people, such as fear God, have had a kind of a shame upon them to acknowledge their low beginning in the world, and used all arts to hide it ; we should never be ashamed to own what God hath done for our Souls, or for our Bodies, that others may be quickened to serve God, and to trust in him ; it argueth much of a thankful heart in a Christian, when he is ready upon all occasions to acknowledge, I was such a poor creature, so mean in the world, God hath done thus for me, all these are what God hath given me.

2. Take heed of being ashamed to own it before the Lord, *Gen. 32. 10. — With my staff passed I over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.* You may observe in Scripture, it is one part of our duty in thanksgiving, to give God the acknowledgment of what he hath done for us.

3. Remember to give the Lord a real acknowledgment, that it is he who hath given thee power to get wealth ; you will say how shall that be ? I answer two ways.

1. *If thou dost watch thy self, that the encrease of thy wealth doth not prove the encrease of*

of thy lust and corruption; this is too common. Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked up the heel; I would have you watch your selves chiefly as to five things.

1. That your Spirits do not heighten with your estates; the Apostle, 1 Tim. 6. 17. commandeth Timothy to charge those that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded--- thereby hinting us, that riches have a malign quality to swell our minds, and elevate our Spirits, they are things whereby a man in the view of the world, differeth from his Neighbour, and seemeth to excel him, now pride taketh advantage of every such thing, be it never so little, to make the Soul to swell, and to think of itself above what it ought to think; Solomon I think somewhere telleth us, that the rich man answereth roughly, when the poor useth intreaties; this we see in the experience of every day; now there is nothing more defileth the Soul than pride; no Soul is lower in Gods Eyes, then that Soul that is highest in its own Eyes; hence you shall observe; that a wicked man is often in Scripture set out under the notion of a proud man, and a godly man under the notion of an humble man; and God is said, to resist the proud, and to give grace to the humble; the word translated to resist, signifieth to set himself in the order of a battel against persons, and it is observable that God is not said any where so to resist any but the proud.

2 Take heed of oppression; --- Do not rich men oppress you---- (saith St. James) and call  
you

*A word to the Rich,*

*you before the Judgment Seats*; This is a sin proper to the rich, for it supposeth power, no man can do wrong to another, that hath not a power greater then his, and power must be maintained by riches; there are diverse species of oppression; there is an oppression in Judgment, this is the sin of unjust Judges; in short, the with-holding of the hire from the labourer, of the wages from the Servant, or any thing from another who hath a right to it, by force & power, is this sin of oppression; which indeed is the effect both of pride and covetousness, and the proper sin of those who have much of this worlds goods, & it is one of the crying sins against any Nation, a worm that lieth at the root of great estates, in so much as the Heathen could say, that an estate ill gotten, seldom passed to the third generation.

*De male  
quesitis vix  
gaudet ter-  
tius heres.*

3. Beware of *Covetousness*; Covetousness is an irregular desire of more than we have, it is something strange, but an old observation, that the most of men, the more they have, the more greedy they are to have more; the Apostle telleth us, *the love of money is the root of all evil*, none are under greater temptations to love it, then those that have the most considerable portions of it; there is a kind of bewitching quality in the good things of this life, and our heart naturally cleaveth to them, and in regard that when we have a competent portion, we have the better foundation, and are at better advantages to get more, commonly as our estates en-  
crease



crease, so our love to things of this life doth more increase, and covetousness is so great an evil, that the Apostle calleth it Idolatry.

4. Beware of Luxury ; Luxury is an excess in meat, drink, or apparel, buildings, household-stuff, or any thing of that nature, an affectation of an undue use of them ; the poor man hath no temptation to it, being exercised sufficiently in getting his dayly bread, they are only men of estates that are exposed to, and ordinarily brought under the power of this temptation ; this is that which the Apostle often cautioneth us against, that we should beware of Chambering and Wantonness, that we should not mind high things, &c. Our Saviour pressing Christians duty to watch and pray, expoundeth it by a *taking heed we be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness.*

5 Beware of Cowardliness in the cause of God, it is an usual Observation, that Cities, though never so populous, yet if full of riches, seldom make any good defence against an enemy, their love of riches prevailing against the love of their liberties, and they are very rarely men of great estates, that will venture themselves in the cause of God, though this be to prefer the love of riches before the love of Christ, which whoso doth, our Saviour saith, is not worthy of him, these are those ordinary temptations to sin, to which men of great estates are exposed, and by which many often fall, I shall only say unto you, *let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.*

2. If

2. If you look upon your selves as Stewards of these good things, and make use of them to the end for which God hath given them to you; God hath betruſted him that is rich with many talents, not to be hid up in a Napkin, but to be laid out, 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.* This is the best acknowledgment that we can make unto God, that by his power we have gotten our wealth, when we are willing to lay it out at his command, when we are ready to do good, and distribute; for with such sacrifice the Lord is well pleased; and certainly if the Heathen, who knew nothing of the mind and will of God, yet thought themselves concerned to look upon their estates as given them for other uses then meerly their own; Christians that have so many directions from God in the case, should know much more.

Ser-

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## SERMON IV.

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Luke 12. 15.

*For a mans life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*

THE words are the words of our Saviour, brought by him as an argument *against* Covetousness; you have the exhortation, *take heed, and beware of Covetousness*; these words are the reason, --- *For a mans life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.* The whole discourse, as you may see, cometh in upon occasion of one that came to our Saviour, desiring him to divide his inheritance, as v. 13. Or to speak to his Brother to divide his inheritance with him, which our Saviour refused, v. 14. As having no call from God to be a Civil Magistrate, a Ruler, or a Judge; from whence we may learn two things.

1. That the business of *meum and tuum*, of dividing and settling inheritances, is the work of Rulers, not of the Ministers of Christ; they may have commission from men for such employments, but they have no commission from God; it is a work that belongeth unto the Ruler.

2. That the Disciples of Christ should be afraid

*fraid of meddling with things out of their callings,* it hath pleased the Lord to establish an order in the world; as an order in Creatures, that they do not enter into one anothers station and works; so an order amongst men appointing unto every man what his work is; and he ought to keep to that, and not to turn aside from it; but this impertinent soliciting of our Saviour, to this eccentric work, giveth him a fair opportunity to press a spiritual exhortation upon them; and that is, *to beware of covetousness*; the reason is in the Text, *for a mans life lieth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.* I shall need no other Doctrine then the words of the Text.

Doct. *A mans life doth not lie in the abundance of what he possesseth.* This Doctrine will need, 1. *Explication.* 2. *Confirmation.* I will open it in two things.

1. *The continuance and preservation of a mans life, doth not lie in the abundance of what he possesseth;* In this sense life is taken, Gen. 45. 5. — *For God did send me before you to preserve life,* Gen. 42. 2. — *and buy for us from thence, that we may live, and not die.* And so often in Scripture, life signifieth the preservation and continuance of life; the continuance of the life of man doth not lie in the abundance of what he possesseth; abundance is not necessary to preserve life; the greatest abundance that we have, will not lengthen out our lives beyond the bounds God hath set; *Natura paucis contenta*; we see the lives of those preserved, to whom God hath not gi-

given such an abundance in this life; and preserved to as great an advantage, as they who have the most; *Daniel*, fareth as well with pulse, as those that did eat of the Kings meat.

2. Oftentimes we see it, that those who have the greatest abundance of the things of this life, do not only die, (as it is appointed for all men) but also they die sooner, and preserve their lives but a little; while the continuance of this life doth not lie in the abundance of that which a man possesseth.

2. *Life, sometimes signifieth happiness*; because the most of men count their great happiness to lie in this life; therefore you shall find frequently in Scripture, life is taken for a state of felicity, *Prov. 4. 23. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life, Prov. 6. 23. Reproofs and instruction are the way of life, Prov. 16. 15. In the light of the Kings countenance is life---* that Text is to be understood of happiness, for to understand it strictly of life, it is not true, *Prov. 18. 21. Death and life are in the power of the tongue---* *Ezek. 33. 15. That walk in the Statutes of life--* Thus in Scripture sense a man is said to live, with whom it is well; I take much of the sense to lie here; for a mans life lieth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. The happiness of a man doth not lie in the abundance that he possesseth; *In the abundance*, it cannot be denied but something of a mans happiness as to this lies in some possession, by what we have, we are kept from those anxieties

ties from those labours which would make our lives uncomfortable, but it doth not lie in the abundance of that which he possesseth; thus you see I have dispatched the Proposition in two things.

1. An abundance of this life is not necessary to the maintenance of it; it hath been proved to you by a double proof.

1. Shewing you, that those who have but little, yet may enjoy much in this life.

2. That those who have much, are often shorter lived, and more incumbered then others who have but little.

2. That the felicity of a mans life; the chief felicity of this life doth not lie in the abundance that he possesseth; this is that which I shall endeavour as briefly as I can to demonstrate unto you; the demonstration of it will appear upon a due consideration, wherein the happiness of a man lieth, wherein the happiness of a mans life lieth.

Reason sheweth that happiness must needs lie in the greatest immunity from evil, and in the freest enjoyment of the best good, whether we take happiness relating to this life, or to that which is to come, the nature of happiness lieth in a fruition of good, and a freedom from evil, and according to the degree of the good we enjoy, or of the evil we are freed from, so is our happiness; now good and evil is judged according to the differing lives that men live; there is a natural life, and there is a spiritual life; the greatest good of a natural life is comfort and satisfaction of mind, a contented frame of spirit; the



the greatest good of a spiritual life is the enjoyment of God; so that take it in which sense you will, it will easily be demonstrated to you, that a mans life, the comfort and happiness of it, doth not lie in the abundance he possesseth; I remember a story I have read of *Pyrrhus* a great Prin. who going to *Italy* to fight against the *Romans*; *Cneus Thessalus* had a mind to dissuade him, he telleth him; my Lord! the *Romans* are Valiant and Warlike; but if we should overcome, what shall we do then? what shall we do, saith *Pyrrhus*? then we will conquer all *Greece*, and all other Nations will yield to us; well, saith *Cneus*, and what then? then, (saith *Pyrrhus*) we will go and conquer *Sicily*, a rich Country; that is well, saith he, but what shall we do then? then (saith he) we will fall upon *Africa* and *Carthage*; saith he, but what shall we do then? *Hilaritati nos trademus, & facietis, colloquiis nos oblectabimur* (saith he;) *Cneus* replieth, but may we not let all these things alone, which will cost much blood, and be happy without them?

*Rainoldi*  
*Orat. p. 39.*

I. The abundance that a man possesseth, will not give him any quiet and satisfaction in his mind, *Prov. 14. 14. --- a good man shall be satisfied from himself.* The satisfaction of a mans mind is from nothing without himself, it is in the internal content and acquiescence of his mind; this is a matter of every days demonstration, it is plain that no man is happy that wanteth content and satisfaction. *Haman* is a man advanced to great honour, yet he is not satisfied, so long as *Mordecai* sitteth in

the Kings Gate; so long as the desires of a man are not filled, so long a man is not happy; now a man may have abundance, and yet be ambitious, and yet be covetous, and looking after, and getting more, and crying still, *give, give*, hence it is, that even in this world you shall see a poor man that hath little or nothing to live upon, yet live a more sweet, a more comfortable life, then he who hath a great estate.

2. *A man may possess abundance as to the things of this life, and yet enjoy nothing of God*; the happiness of a natural life, lieth in the satisfaction of the mind, in a moderate enjoyment of the things of this life, but the happiness of a spiritual life lieth not here; it is possible that a man may be filled with wind, & satisfied with that which ought not to give him any satisfaction, though the appearing happiness of a man lieth in this, and his sensible happiness be in the rest and acquiescing of his mind in what he hath; yet the true happiness of the mind lieth higher, in the enjoyment of that good which is commensurate, and adequate to the necessities of the Soul, now nothing of good is commensurate to the necessity of the Soul, but God alone, the reason of this lieth, because a man is created under an Ordination to an eternal existence, in a life which is beyond this life; and a man cannot be said to be truly and perfectly happy, till he be either secured in his hope, or in his possession of this; the possession of this is referred to another life, but the securing

ring of this, is in this life, by a lively hope, and by an assurance; now every one seeth that the happiness of a mans life as to this cannot lie in the abundance of the things which he possesseth; a man may possess abundance here, and yet come short of Heaven, yea, saith the Scripture; *Not many rich, not many noble.* There are not many to whom the Lord giveth a portion here and hereafter too. Son (saith Abraham to Dives) remember thou hadst thy good things in thy life-time, some indeed in this world are the Lords *Benjamins*, he serveth them with a double mess; they have much of the Creature, and much of the Creator too, but I say this is the portion of but very few; but this is enough to have spoken as to the opening of the point, and proving it, shewing you that the happiness of a mans life, doth not lie in the abundance which he possesseth; I come now to apply it; and the great use of this point, shall be that which our Saviour maketh of it.

Use 1. *Take heed therefore, and beware of Covetousness;* It is an exhortation that is much pressed upon Christians in Scripture, *Heb. 13. 5.* Let your conversation be without covetousness; *Eph. 5. 3.* ---let it not be once named amongst you--- *Col. 3. 5.* ---and covetousness, which is Idolatry, *Psal. 10. 3.* ---the covetous whom the Lord abhorreth. You shall find it joined with the vilest sins, *Rom. 1. 29.* Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers,

*A word to the Rich,*

Prov. 28. 16. *---he that hateth covetousness, shall prolong his days.* Ephes. 5. 5. *For this you know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an Idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, and of God.* So also 1 Cor. 6. 10. *Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* In the further prosecution of this use, I shall do 2 things.

1. I will open to you the true notion of Covetousness.

2. I will shew you by what Arguments you shall arm your selves against it, & in particular shew you the force of this argument.

There are two words in the Greek, which comprehend much of the nature of covetousness, φιλαργυρία, πλεόνεξια a love of mony, a love of silver, and a desire still of having and getting in the world; Covetousness may be shortly described thus: It is *an immoderate desire of riches*, and the enjoying the things in this life; a desire of riches duly moderated and regulated, is not sinful, riches are *subsidia vite*, they are the aids of this life, as God hath allotted us a time to live in this world, and hath subjected our life to many necessities, and hath created the inferiour Creatures for the use and service of man, to supply his necessities, so for a man under due circumstances to desire a share in them, is not sinful, and cannot come under the name of Covetousness; but when this desire exceedeth its due bounds, then it becometh sinful and de-

degenerateth into this vice of *Covetousness*; in short, this corrupt habit of *Covetousness* doth discover itself in our hearts, by five things.

1. It discovereth itself by *immoderate cares*, thinking and contriving how a man should get the things of this life; there is a covetous care, and there is a pious care, *Phil. 4. 6. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God.* There is a great difference betwixt carefulness and immoderate care; we are bid in Scripture to cast all our care upon God, *1 Pet. 5. 7. Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.* God alloweth us a provident care, but he forbiddeth a distracting, dividing care, a Christian hath better things to take care for, *1 Cor. 7. 32. But I would have you without carefulness—* immoderate care argueth an immoderate desire.

2. *Covetousness* discovereth itself by *immoderate labour*, we ought to labour; *Un the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread*, it is a reproach to eat the bread of idleness; and it is the Apostles precept, that he who will not labour, should not eat; yet we are commanded not to labour; *John 6. 27. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life—* So that it is only an excessive, undue labour which God forbiddeth; but now you will say, what is that you call immoderate care, and immoderate labour? I answer in short, both care and labour are immoderate when they



turn to the prejudice of the body, or to the prejudice of the Soul.

1. *When they turn to the prejudice of the body*; there is nothing so eateth a man up, as care and solicitude, they do as it were divide the man; and what influence labour hath upon the body, the same influence care hath upon the mind; care is then immoderate, and so is labour, when it turneth to the prejudice of the Soul or Body; for in reason the Soul is better then the Body, and the life is better then rayment; God hath commanded us in the first place to look after our Souls, and we are bound to care for them.

2. *When they turn to the prejudice of the Soul*, by hindering its communion with God.

1. *Either in the more inward exercises of meditation, faith, and trusting in God.*

2. Or more outward exercises, such as Prayer, and those religious duties which God requireth of us; that a man cannot find time to pray or hear the Word of God, or to perform any religious duty which the Lord requireth of him.

3. Covetousness discovereth itself by using of undue means; when men will get riches by lying, by cheating, by defrauding, by oppressing, this is a great argument to a covetous mind; for the desire must be immoderate, which prompteth a man to such irregular and immoderate actions as these are.

4. By an immoderate fear, when we have them, of losing them; the Apostle speaketh of some who through fear of death, were all  
their



their lives subject to bondage, truly there are in the world men so covetous, as through fear of poverty, and through fear of want are all their life-time subject to bondage, never enjoying any thing of what they have.

5. A fifth thing, which discovereth a covetous mind, is a dissatisfaction in the midst of our enjoyments, when the mind is not filled, God hath given one man more then he hath given perhaps to some Families, yet his mind is not filled, he doth not say that he hath enough.

6. A sixth and last thing which discovereth a covetous mind, is, an immoderate love and delight in what we have; Soul, take thine ease, (saith he) thou hast goods laid up for thee for many years. Now this immoderate joy and delight appears,

1. In the excess of a mans delight; when a mans heart is even melted into his bags, and runs out into his gold and silver.

2. When a man can by no means indure to part with his riches; either when nature calleth for them; or when God calleth for them.

1. When nature calleth for our riches; for our selves for food and rayment; for our Children to dispose them in the world; but this almost every one will acknowledge.

2. When God calleth for our estate, God calleth for it when your Brethren are in want, poor, and in prison; when you cannot part with it, when nature calleth for it, or when God by his Word calleth for it, it argueth a

too great love & delight in it; & consequently a too great desire of it; I beseech you take heed and beware of this *Covetousness*; there are many Arguments, by which the Scripture presseth this upon you.

1. *The sinfulness of it*, Isa. 57. 17. *For the iniquity of his Covetousness I was wroth--*

2. *The exceeding sinfulness of it*; the Apostle calls it *Idolatry*. Col. 3. 5. *Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is Idolatry*. The Apostle saith it is not to be named, Ephe. 5. 3. *But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not once be named amongst you--* It is joined with the worst of sins, Rom. 1. 29. *Such as those who are guilty of them, shall never enter into the Kingdom of God. Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness--&c.* Thirdly, Consider,

3. *What a root of evil it is*, 1 Tim. 6. 10. *For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves thorow with many sorrows*. All neglect of duty lying, cheating, defrauding, oppressing; it is endless to reckon how many evils grow from this one root of covetousness.

4. Consider, Fourthly, *The unprofitableness of it*; no man by thinking can add one cubit to his stature; how many do we see torment themselves with care, fear, and trouble, and labour, and when they have done all they

they can, they are not able to reach to their ends. I only desire further to press upon you this one argument of our Saviour, which you have in the Text; *A mans life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*

1. Consider, An abundance is not necessary to this life; *ad manum est quod sat est*, saith Seneca, *Sudamus ad supervacanea*, a moderate care, a moderate labour is enough for necessities, what we sweat for is usually superfluities, an abundance is not necessary for thy own life, nor for the life of thy Child; something is necessary, but an abundance is not necessary; God hath so graciously ordained, that our life lieth not in the abundance of what we have, life is not maintained by the abundance of what we have.

2. Consider, An abundance will not lengthen out thy life; you see Princes, Noblemen, and rich men, they die as well as others, something of this world, is sometimes necessary to keep a man living, but an abundance will not lengthen out a mans life.

3. Consider, The happiness of thy life doth not lie in the abundance of what thou hast in possession; doth not thy happiness lie rather in the rest, and quiet content and satisfaction of thy mind; when thou hast gotten all thy heart can wish, all that thy Childs heart can wish, hast thou in the least purchased content to thy self, or to him? If God arms but one thought against thee, or thy Child; it spoileth all thy satisfaction; if but  
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an humour be disordered in thy body, and thy self or thy Child be in a melancholy temper, all the world will not give thy mind rest; why then dost thou labour? why dost thou cark and care, and art so solicitous? thy life lieth not in the abundance of the things thou possessest; but thus much is enough for the first Exhortation; take heed, and beware of Covetousness; and consider whatsoever hath been said as to your selves, is true as to your Children, so as you need not make that a pretence for your immoderate desires.

Use 2. My second use is that of the Apostle, *1 Tim. 6. 1. 8. And having food and rayment, let us be therewith content.* Food and Rayment are necessities; if the Lord giveth us but enough to cloath us, and to feed us, let us never be concerned; mark how many arguments might be brought for this from Scripture.

1. *We brought nothing into the world, we can carry nothing out of the world.*

2. *They that will be rich, fall into temptation, and hurtful lusts.*

3. *The love of money is the root of all evil.*

4. *Godliness with contentment is great gain;* if God hath given us but enough, let us be therewith content. *Agur* begged no more then food convenient for him; he prayed against riches, as well as against poverty, *Gen. 28. 20.* See *Jacobs* vow. And *Jacob* vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat,

eat, and rayment to put on, &c. It is a shame for Christians, they should not consider how contented the Heathens were, and with what scorn they would look upon all the world. What! have Christians principles below those of Heathens? there were two opinions of Philosophers, the *Stoicks* thought riches was no ingredient to mans happiness; others saw a necessity of some of this worlds goods for the exercise of Virtue, but all agree in this, that the happiness of a man doth not lie in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. .

Use 3. What an opportunity doth this offer to those that are poor to bless God? The Apostle rejoiced that God had opened a door of salvation for the Gentiles; let those that are poor in this world rejoice, and let us rejoice for them for this door of happiness, which is opened for them by these words of our Saviour; if only the rich could be happy, if content, were entailed upon them only, then none could be happy but the rich, but blessed be God it is not so; the poor man may be happy as well as the rich, spiritually happy as well as the rich man.

Use 4. In the next place; see here what an encouragement here is to do good, our Saviour viewing those who were throwing in to the treasury, saw some throw in a great deal, and a poor Widow throwing in two Mites, our Saviour said, she had done more than they all; for they had thrown in out of their abundance, but she out of her penury  
and



and want; *a mans life doth not lie in the abundance of what he possesseth*; God doth not call to you to throw away that wherein your life lieth, nor those things which are necessary for your life; he only calleth to you to throw in out of your abundance; he calleth to you only for your superfluities; and certainly it is but reasonable that we should part with these, when God calleth for them; especially if we consider that God hath but made us his Stewards of these, and hath therefore given us them: that we should at his command part with them.

Use 5. If a mans life, the happiness of it doth not lie in the abundance of what he possesseth; if God hath not laid up your life in them, do not you lay up your life in them your selves.

1. Do not make it your business for to get them; do not *desudare ad supervacanea*, do not let the business of your life be to load your self with thick clay, *Habbak. 2. 6.* There is a woe denounced unto him who thus loadeth himself, --- *Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his; how long! and to him that loadeth himself with thick clay.*

2. Be not tormented; if the Lord depriveth you of some of your riches; blessed be God, your life doth not lie in them, they are not your happiness; they could not preserve your life when you had them, let them not destroy you, now you want them; they could not  
make



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make you happy in the enjoyment of them,  
do not make your selves miserable in the want  
and deprivation of them.

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## S E R M O N V. VI, VII, VIII.

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2 Tim. 1. 8.

*Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the power of God.*

**M**Y Text you see is in the Epistle of Paul to Timothy, the second Epistle that he wrote to him. Who this Timothy was, the Scripture abundantly telleth us, the name signifieth one that feareth God; it was the usual course of Parents in those days to give their Children names, that might either express their sense of the mercy that God had given them, as Samuel [begged of God] Reuben [see a Son,] Simeon [hearing] Levi [joined] Judah [praise;] or such as might express the Childrens duty to God; such was this name Timothy; some think Timothy was born at Lystra, a place in Asia; there Paul found him, Acts 16. 1. 2. Then came he to Derbe and Lystra; and behold a certain Disciple

*The nature of a true Testimony,*

ple was there, named Timotheus, the Son of a certain Woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his Father was a Greek. Which was well reported of by the Brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. chap. 14. 6. They were aware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, Cities of Lycaonia— His Father was a Greek, his Mother was a Jew, Acts 16. 1. Her name was Eunice, her Mother Lois, they brought him up from a Child in the knowledge of the Scriptures, 2 Tim. 1. 5. When I call to mind the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy Grandmother Lois, and thy Mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also, chap. 3. 41, 15. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them. And that from a Child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus. His Father being a Greek, he was not circumcised at his birth, but afterwards, Acts 16. 1, 2, 3. After which, Paul took him about with him in his Travels, and made great use of him; sometimes he was sent as a Messenger, 1 Tim. 5. 11. Sometimes as a Preacher, and he had many bodily weaknesses; so as he was glad to drink a little wine for his stomach sake, but he abounded with excellent graces, faith, wisdom, temperance, he was at last ordained a Minister with the imposition of the hands of the Presbytery, 2 Tim. 1. 6. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands,

hands, the Apostle telleth us he had none like minded to him, *Phil. 2. 19. 20, 21, 22.* But I trust in the Lord Jesus, to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man like minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christs. But you know the proof of him, that as a Son with the Father, he hath served with me in the Gospel; he calls him his Brother, his Beloved Son, faithful in the Lord, his natural Son in the faith, the Minister of God, his fellow helper, he joineth him with himself. At last he leaveth him at Ephesus, but he seemeth not to have been there when he wrote this Epistle, *2 Tim. 4. 12.* And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. This Epistle seemeth to have been written the last of the Epistles, and a little before Pauls death, *2 Tim. 4. 6.* For I am now ready to be offered; and the time of my departure is at hand. Paul died (as is said) in the 37th year after Christ, in the 14th year of the reign of Nero.

This Epistle, as the rest, consisteth of a Preface, wherein is shewed the substance of the Gospel, the Preface is in the five first verses.

The substance of the Epistle is hortatory, consolatory, and minatory; he exhorteth Timothy, v. 6. To stir up the gift of God that was in him--- and this he presseth by some arguments. v. 6. 7. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind; in the verse where the text is, he exhorteth him, not to be ashamed of the testimony

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mony of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor of him, though a prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, which he presseth by several arguments, to the end of the 12th verse.

This verse is made up of an *Exhortation*, and the *Argument*, the *Exhortation* is in three branches.

1. Not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord Jesus.

2. Not to be ashamed of St. Paul, who was at this time a prisoner.

3. To partake of the afflictions of the Gospel; the Propositions of the text are these.

Prop. 1. That Ministers and Christians have a testimony to give unto our Lord Jesus Christ, in the giving of which, they are not to decline a Prison.

Prop. 2. That it is the duty of faithful Ministers and People not to be ashamed to give this testimony, nor of others when they do give it.

Prop. 3. There are Afflictions that are proper to the Gospel.

Prop. 4. That both Ministers and People ought to be partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel.

Prop. 5. It must be through the power of God, that any one is enabled to partake of the afflictions of the Gospel. According to the power of God. It is the third of these only that I intend to make the subject of my discourse, the others will fall in in the handling of that.

Prop. That it is the duty both of Gospel Ministers, and Christians owning the Gospel, not to  
be

be ashamed of the testimony of Jesus Christ, nor of the afflictions of the Gospel, but to be partakers of them.

In the handling of this Proposition there are these Questions, which I shall speak unto in their order.

Qu. 1. What is meant by the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Qu. 2. What afflictions are they, which are said to be the afflictions of the Gospel?

Qu. 3. When may men be said to be ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord, and how far are we bound not to be so?

Qu. 4. Why are we bound not to be ashamed of the testimony of Christ, and why ought we not to be partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel?

Qu. 1. What is meant by the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ?

A Testimony is an attestation which any one giveth concerning any person, or concerning any thing; In every testimony there is to be considered three things.

1. The Person, who giveth the Testimony.

2. The Thing, to which the Testimony is given.

3. The Way, by which the Testimony is given. As to the present Testimony of which we are speaking, the Persons that give it, are the Ministers of the Gospel, such a one was Timothy, but they are not all so, Rev. 6. 9. St. John saith, ---I saw under the Altar, the Souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held; eve-



ry Minister is a special witness, and to bear his Testimony, and every good Christian is also to be a witness. It is said of Christ, *1 Tim. 6. 13. ---who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession*; every Christian ought in this to be conformable unto Christ.

2. Another thing which is to be considered in a Testimony, is the thing or person to which it relateth, for the term Testimony is a *Relative* word, and the proper *Correlate* to it is *Truth*, which relates again either to a *Proposition*, or to a *matter of fact*; no person can be under any obligation to give Testimony to a lie, but now truth relateth either to a *Proposition*, or to a *fact*; every man is a debtor to the truth, and is bound as a man to bear Testimony. Christ telleth *Pilate*, *John 18.37. ---to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth---* but when I speak of the testimony that every good Christian is bound to give, I understand it not thus largely; for though it be that every good man is under an obligation to testify the truth in any cause, yet the Ministers of the Gospel, and every good Christian is under a more special obligation to give testimony to *some truths*, and these are the truths of the Gospel, the truths that relate to Jesus Christ; this is that the text calleth, the *Testimony of our Lord*, which may be taken in a double sense.

I. Either



1. Either for that Testimony which our Lord bare of himself.

2. Or the Testimony which every good Christian is bound to give to the truths of the Gospel. Christ bare a Testimony of himself; he testified that he was the son of God, that he was the King of Zion, that he was the true Messiah; but I understand it yet larger; every Minister of the Gospel, and every good Christian is obliged to bear a Testimony to the great truths of the Gospel, which relate to Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Saviour; there is a Testimony which he ought to bear to those Propositions of truth, and to those matters of fact, which the Gospel containeth and relateth concerning Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world.

3. The third thing which is considerable in a Testimony, is the way of giving it; the proper giving a Testimony, is by the words of our mouth; either with an oath, or without an oath; it is one thing for a man to believe a Proposition, and another thing for him to give Testimony to a Proposition; he believeth a Proposition, that hearing it, doth in heart consent and agree to it, that the Predicate is well fitted to the Subject, whether he speaketh a word, yea, or no; but he testifieth, that with his words owneth and declareth his faith, Rom. 10. 10. *For with the heart man believeth unto Righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto Salvation.* It is not enough for a Christian secretly in his heart to agree to the truths of the Gospel, but he is bound to give

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a Testimony; *If thou shalt therefore confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* You may observe, there are two things made necessary to Salvation.

1. *A heart believing the Proposition of the Gospel.*

2. *An external confession or profession.*

There is a double confession, a Christians duty.

1. *A confession of sin.*

2. *A confession of truth.*

Either confession is an open acknowledgment with our lips, thus you read in Scripture frequently of confessing of Christ, only it may be there is this difference betwixt a Testimony and confession; any open, asserting, vindicating, and defending Christ and his Gospel, is *giving a Testimony*, but when it is done in the face of Enemies, in despite of opposition, this is confession, *Matth. 10. 32. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven, Luke 12. 8. ---whosoever shall confess me before men--- thus, John 12. 42. Many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him.* So that the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ signifieth, that open acknowledgment of Christ, and profession of the truths of the Gospel, relating to Christ, which is the duty of every good Christian.

Qu. 2. *What is here meant by the afflictions of the Gospel.*

The Original doth something differ, *συγκαταθήσων τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ*, suffer thou evils together with the Gospel; where the Gospel is brought in as if it were a Person by a figure; a Person that is subject to evils. Timothy is exhorted to suffer evil with the Gospel; this leads me to the consideration what those afflictions are, what those evils are to which the Gospel is subjected; there are several evils to which the Gospel is subjected, or rather evils from three sorts of persons.

1. *From the true Professors of it; such as own Christ in truth and sincerity.*

2. *From the false and seeming Professors of it.*

3. *From the professed enemies of it.*

The afflictions of the Gospel are the afflictions which men are subjected to, from their owning and professing of the Gospel, and these I say are from 3 sorts of Persons.

1. *From such as are the true and sincere professors of it*, they may bite and devour one another, and be thorns and goads in one anothers sides. These commonly are so from one of these two heads.

1. *From an overheated zeal for the maintaining of different apprehensions in some matters of truth.*

2. *From such corruptions as do attend Gods people, considered as men, made up of flesh and blood.*

1. *From an immoderate zeal for the maintain-*

*ing of different apprehensions in some matters of truth*; truth is an uniform thing, and is but one; two contradictory Propositions cannot be true; but since the fall of man none have the same apprehensions, there are different apprehensions concerning truth; it is true, we have the promise of the Spirit of truth to *guide us, and to lead us into all truth*; but the sense of the promise must not be extended so far, that because all Christians have the spirit of God, therefore they shall all be guided, that they shall not have misapprehensions in a Proposition of truth, they shall be guided into all necessary truth, they shall not miscarry in any apprehension of truth, upon which the salvation of their Souls depend; but they may be mistaken as to a multitude of particular *Propositions*; one may judge one thing, and another another thing, yet they all hold the foundation, the fundamental truths of the Gospel; but they may have very different apprehensions as to some particular truths: now through an over-weaning opinion of our own apprehensions, there are very great differences, and also hard censurings and condemnings of one another, and these are great afflictions, but such as have attended the Gospel from the very beginning; they were such different apprehensions that caused the first Christian Synod. *Acts 15. 1, Some came and taught the necessity of circumcision---* such differences there were, *Rom. 14. 2. For one believeth he may eat all things, another who is weak eateth herbs*; hence they judged, despised, con-  
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demned and censured one another, and the Apostle persuadeth to a friendly carriage one towards another, a mutual forbearance one of another, in these different apprehensions in matters of truth of a lighter nature; mens immoderate zeal for their own opinions, have in all times begot great heats, and have caused great afflictions to the Ministers of the Gospel, and to the Professors of it, and have been a great root of bitterness amongst Gods own people, we have seen enough of it in the age, and in this part of the Church, where in the Lord hath cast our lot.

2. Another root of this bitterness hath been, *Those passions that the best of men have been subject to. Elijah was a great man of God, yet, Jam 5. 17. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are---* and the Apostle writing to the Corinthians, telleth them, 1 Cor. 3. 3. *---Whereas there is among you envying and strife, and divisions, are you not carnal? the Apostle telleth us, Jam. 4. 5. ---that the Spirit that is in us lusteth to envy.* Envy is a peevish passion, it maketh us to repine at the good of another, and though it ought to be rooted out of the heart of Gods people, and is in a great measure, yet something of it remaineth, and it is very often seen, that when some Ministers of the Gospel excel others in Parts, or in Grace, or private Christians so exceed; through this lust of envy which is in the hearts of others, they are exposed to censures, and to be evil spoken of, others grudging at them; which are all fruits of the old man which are in us,  
strife,

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*strife, and contention, Acts 15. 39. And the contention was so sharp betwixt them, that they departed asunder, one from the other, the difference betwixt Paul and Barnabas was so very small, that it was onely whether they should carry John with them, yea, or no, but it waxed so hot, that Paul and Barnabas upon it left one another, Paul went one way, and Barnabas went another way, these are some of the afflictions of the Gospel, not caused by the Gospel, but incident to them who promote the Gospel.*

2. But a second sort of men that raise up afflictions to the Ministers and Professors of the Gospel, are *false Brethren*; men who have received the truth, but not in the love of it, who from some lusts would pervert the Gospel of Christ, and become great enemies to the sincere Professors of it, and that chiefly two ways.

1. By *broaching and publishing some Doctrines that are contrary to the truths of the Gospel*, the Apostle experienced some of these in the first beginning of the Gospel; no sooner was the Gospel preached in *Galatia*, but there arose some that troubled them, and would pervert the Doctrine of Christ; upon this account it is, that the Apostle to the *Philippians* calleth the *Jews* those of the *concision*, St. John telleth you of many Antichrists that arose in his time, so as you read something of this in almost every Epistle of the Apostles, these things have constantly given a great deal of trouble to the faithful Ministers of the Gospel,



pel, and also them who have been the sincere Professors of it.

2. By aspersing the faithful Ministers and Professors of the Gospel, to lessen their reputation, and make them odious unto people, sometimes affixing crimes to them that they never designed in their hearts, sometimes by aspersing them as weak & unlearned men; you shall see this was a great art they used against St. Paul, as you will observe by reading over the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, and his Epistles to the Corinthians, this maketh him speak so much in his own defence, and in the commendation and magnifying of his Office, nay, they speak of him as if he were a reprobate, they sought a proof of Christ in him, 2 Cor. 13. 3. which caused him to say, Since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak--- & v. 4. --for we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God; he saith, v. 6. But I trust you shall know we are not reprobates. v. 7. --- I pray to God that you do no evil-- but that you should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates. These are a sort and kind of afflictions which the Gospel of Christ hath always met with in the true Professors of it; now the root of this is nothing but wrath, and malice, and envy, lust liveth and reigneth in the hearts of such, who though they have made a profession of the truth, yet they never received it in the love of it.

3. The afflictions of the Gospel are those afflictions which are brought upon the faithful Ministers

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*Ministers and Professors of the Gospel for their Profession, from the open and professed enemies of it ; now these are to be considered in their kinds, and in their causes ; In their kinds ; In short, they are all sorts of external afflictions, man can kill the body, and hurt the outward man, but he can do no more ; but so far as they can, they will go ; reproaches and calumnies respecting men in their honour and reputation, rising their estates, casting them into Prisons, taking away their lives, in short, whatsoever can be afflictive to the outward man, for there are no sort of external afflictions, but we shall find that the true and sincere Professors of the Gospel have met with, James was killed with the Sword, Stephen was stoned to death ; the Apostles were often imprisoned, others, as the Apostle saith, had trial of cruel mockings, and scourgings, yea, of bonds and imprisonments, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the Sword, they wandered about in Sheep-skins, and in Goat-skins, being tormented, of whom the world was not worthy ; the story of Scripture, and the story of the several Martyrs doth sufficiently tell us what the afflictions of the Gospel are, but why the Gospel should suffer such things, or men should suffer such things for the publishing, owning, and professing the Gospel, may seem a little wonderful, and deserveth a further enquiry ; for if we consider the nature of the Gospel, the very import of the word is no other then a good message, or good tidings ; the Angel gave*

gave the Gospel its true name; when he proclaimed, *Luke 2. 10.* --- *behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.* So as there is nothing in the whole systeme of the Gospel, that can deserve any hatred of it, the Gospel is nothing else but that good saying, that, *Jesus Christ is come into the world to save Sinners*; --- *That God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should have everlasting life*; what hath Christ done? or what is there in the Gospel that should provoke the lusts and passions of men to give any opposition, that there should be any affliction entailed to the Gospel?

1. I answer, the true root of this lieth in that enmity which God hath set betwixt the Woman and her seed, and the Serpent and his seed, you have it, *Gen. 3. 15.* *And I will put enmity betwixt thee and the Woman, and betwixt thy seed and her seed*--- the Womans seed was Christ, the Serpents seed are vile, wicked, and ungodly men, there is an enmity, an implacable enmity betwixt these two, and so long as the world endureth, this enmity will abide, and the Devil will be managing a design to drive Christ, and the Gospel of Christ out of the world; all the reproaches of Ministers and Godly Christians, all their bonds and imprisonments which they suffer for the Gospel, they are but the fruits and product of this enmity, this hatred and antipathy which is betwixt Christ and the Devil, and the seed of Christ, and the seed of the Devil.

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2. Another reason of it lieth in the nature of the *Propositions of the Gospel*, as to the *Doctrine of faith*, and as to the *precepts of the Gospel*, so far as it concerneth holiness, the sublimity of the first, and the purity of the latter, and its exceeding strictness. The sublimeness of the *Doctrine of faith*, raiseth it two sorts of enemies.

1. *The ignorant persons of the world.*

2. *Those men who have idolized their own reason*, and are determined to believe nothing but what they can fathom by their own reason.

1. For the first, ignorant Persons; the Apostle telleth us of some who *speak evil of what they know not*, there is nothing more unworthy of a man then this, yet there is nothing more ordinary, especially when men apprehend the ways and persons that they speak evil of, are enemies to their lusts and corruptions, the Apostle telleth us, 1 Cor. 2. 7, 8. ---we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained, before the world unto our glory. Which none of the Princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. The wisdom of God signifieth the Gospel of Christ, and the Apostle saith, the Princes of this world did not know it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. The most ignorant persons, if they be also loose in their lives, are enemies to the Gospel of Christ.

2. *Men that have idolized their own reason,*  
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and entertained a fancy that they should comprehend the highest mysteries of the Kingdom of God, that which maketh them enemies to the Gospel of Christ, is their zeal; they are puff'd up in their own opinion of their own reason, and are certain enemies to whatever they cannot comprehend with it; now the Doctrines of the Gospel being of that nature, that sublime nature, that ignorant persons cannot comprehend them, and men of reason cannot fathom them with their own reason, they become enemies unto them, and to the true Professors of them; hence it was that the *Philosophers* of old were such enemies to the Gospel of Christ.

2. As the sublimity of the Propositions of the Gospel is one great reason of the opposition which it meeteth with in the world; so the exceeding purity and holiness of the precepts of the Gospel is another reason; take the Gospel, as it bringeth news of a Saviour who died for sinners, it pleaseth them well enough; but look upon it as it containeth a systeme of precepts, an obedience to which, must be given in order to the obtaining of that salvation, so it quite crosseth the grain of flesh and blood, as it teacheth us that *no Drunkard, no Fornicator, no Swearer shall come into the Kingdom of God*, thus they cannot approve of it; and this maketh them enemies, as to the Doctrine of the Gospel, so to the Ministers and Professors of it; for though they have so much lust as will not suffer them to comply with the Doctrine of the Gospel, yet they have

have also so much pride, that they cannot endure themselves to be contradicted, and outdone by the Professors of it; but this is enough to shew you what the afflictions of the Gospel are, of which the Apostle would have *Timothy* content to be a partaker; and what that testimony of Christ is, of which he would not have him to be ashamed; I come now to the next Question.

Qu. 3. *When men may be said to be ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord; and what the meaning is, to be partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel?*

To be ashamed of the testimony of Christ, I conceive signifieth two things.

1. *To be ashamed, or afraid to give a testimony unto Christ, and to the truth of the Gospel, to be afraid to give a testimony of Christ, because of the opposition of men is a great sin, it is contrary to the precept. Fear not them who can kill the body, and can do no more, but fear him that is able to cast Body and Soul into Hell-fire----* but to be ashamed of this testimony, is a greater sin; because the temptation is higher under the former, then under the latter; to be ashamed of the testimony of Christ, is to decline, to own, and profess Jesus Christ; when there is no great danger that threatneth us in such a Profession, we have an *High-Priest that can have compassion upon our infirmities----* but when no such danger threatneth a man, only he may suffer a little in his honour and repute amongst men, and they may not have so good an opinion of him, & for  
this



this to decline the publick owning and professing of Christ, it must needs be a very great sin; it is a dreadful Text, *Mark. 8. 38. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy Angels.* For a man to be afraid to own Christ and his Gospel, and the profession of it, when utmost danger threatneth him, is sin enough; it arguing that the fear of man prevaileth in him above the fear of God; but for a man, when no such danger threatneth him, to be ashamed, and to think it beneath him to own the Gospel, and to love the honour that is from men, before the honour that cometh from God, is a very dreadful transgression.

2. That man is ashamed of the testimony of Christ, *That is ashamed of others, for the testimony which they bear to Jesus Christ;* I must confess, I think this is that which the Apostle here chiefly intendeth, *Paul was now a Prisoner,* and at *Rome*, the condition of Prisoners you know, is a low and contemptible condition, now for a person to be ashamed to be a friend, or companion, or to own the relation to, and acquaintance with any, because they are giving a testimony to Christ, and for that testimony are hated, maligned, and persecuted, is to be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, It is reported of that famous Emperor *Constantine the Great*, that he would often kiss the hole of *Paphnutius's* eye, that was bored out for the profession of the Gospel.

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What is the meaning of the phrase, *our testimony*. *Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel*—

1. Negatively; it doth not imply that it is the will of God, that any man should throw himself into the afflictions of the Gospel; the best of afflictions are trials and temptations, no man ought to pull trials upon himself, we read indeed of some in the Primitive times, that offered themselves to the stake, and owned themselves to be Christians, ambitious of the Crown of Martyrdom, but these things are *miracula*, to be admired, not *imitanda*, to be imitated; no man is bound to put his self upon suffering afflictions, no not in defence of the Gospel of Christ, we ought to see our call clear to suffering, as well as doing, in that sense therefore this precept must not be understood. But,

2. It speaketh unto every Christian to expect that his owning and professing of the Gospel, should meet with afflictions; and to be content to take a share in them, *Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel*— look that the Gospel should be afflicted, and be contented to take thy share with the Gospel in its afflictions; our Saviour telleth us; *That no Prince goeth out to war with another; but he first sitteth down, and considereth whether he with 10000 shall be able to meet with his enemy with 20000*. Christians, before men undertake the profession of the Gospel, they ought to sit down and consider what the Gospel will cost them; for the tempers of our spirits under divine pro-

providences, are much according to our expectation; if we expect nothing but good, and meet with nothing but evil, the evil sinketh us, we did not look for it, *Mala inopinata graviora*; but this is not all, to be content to take our part in afflictions with the Gospel, if God calleth us to suffer for owning and professing the Gospel of Christ, and not think it strange; we should not murmur and repine against it, or take any unlawful course to decline; but to cast our lot with Professors, and to take our share with them, and to be content to suffer evil with them, who suffer for the name of Christ, or for the profession of any of his truths; nay, it may be there is something more our duty than this; and that is, to rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer any thing for the name of our Lord Jesus, Acts 5. 41. Singing in the prison into which we are thrown, as Paul and Silas did; taking the spoiling of our goods with joy.

3. Nay, there is something more in this phrase, viz. *a suffering together with others that suffer for the Gospel, though we do not suffer at all*, and indeed this is properly *συμπαρουσιν*; we ought to have a sympathy with the Gospel, and the Professors of it, it is that which the Apostle urgeth, and thus it answereth that text, Rom. 12. 15. *Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep*: both these are put together in that phrase, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Heb. 10. 34. *For you had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods*—Both these are the

duty of good Christians ; to suffer with them that suffer for the Gospel ; and to be content to suffer themselves, if God calleth them to it in defence of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ; as the Apostle had upon him the care of all the Churches, 2 Cor. II. 28, 29. So he had upon him the sorrow and affliction of all the Church of Christ ; the Apostle in that Chap. v, 23. telleth us what stripes, what imprisonments, what deaths he was in ; and then he telleth us, that he did not thus only suffer with, and for the Gospel, but also *he was afflicted, and he burned with others* ; and this is the duty of every Christian, they ought to partake joyfully, and with satisfaction to take their share in those afflictions, to which the preaching or owning the Gospel doth expose them, and also to bear the burthens of others, and to be content to suffer with them, to bear some share in their sorrow, in their trials and afflictions. I come to the next question.

*Qu. 4. Whence ariseth this obligation upon Christians ; and why are they thus to partake of the afflictions of the Gospel, and not to be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord?*

This Question hath two Branches.

*Qu. 1. Whence ariseth this obligation upon them not to be ashamed to give this Testimony, nor of it when given ?*

*Qu. 2. Whence ariseth this obligation upon Christians to be partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel ?*

For the first of these ; whence this obligation doth arise upon Christians not to be ashamed

shamed of the testimony of our Lord? I shall open it to you in seven or eight particulars.

1. *From the will of God.* This is the true and proper foundation of all duty; the will of God, and the duty of Christians are Correlates; nothing can be our duty towards God, but what is the will of God towards us, and nothing can be the will of God towards us, but it must become our duty; this is the will of God; it is the will of God that we should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord; neither our selves, to give testimony unto Christ nor his Gospel, nor yet of them who do give such testimony. It is indeed the will of God concerning some more eminently than others; but concerning all Christians, it is the will of God; it is spoken concerning all, *Rom. 10. 9. That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus Christ, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved, Mat. 10. 32. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven.* The Apostle writeth to the *Thessalonians, 1 Thes. 3. 3. That no man should be moved by these afflictions, for your selves know that we are appointed thereunto, Col. 4. 12.* It is the duty of Christians to be compleat in all the will of God. It is not only the will of God that men should pray, that they hear the word, and receive the Sacrament, but they should give their testimony, and not be ashamed of the testimony of Christ their Lord, *2 Tim. 4. 5. Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions---*



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2 Tim. 2. 3. *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ.* Ministers and good Christians are witnesses; and they are Soldiers, and therefore they ought to endure hardness, and to be ready to give their testimony.

2. It appeareth from the relation that every good Christian standeth in to Christ as his Lord; *wee* <sup>wee</sup> ~~wee~~; mark the words, *that thou be not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord*; every Subject is bound to give his testimony for the King, because he is his Sovereign Lord; every Servant is bound to give his testimony for his Master, because he is his Lord: Christ is our Lord, and therefore there lieth an obligation upon us to give testimony for him; would not your Prince take it ill, if you should refuse being called, to testify the truth for him? & would not your Master take it ill, if you should refuse to give your testimony for him? Surely Christ, who is our Lord, must take it ill from us, if we refuse a testimony to him. If every man, because that he is a debtor to the truth, taketh himself obliged by the law of Charity to give a testimony to the truth for his Neighbour, when his estate, or his life is concerned, or any thing of his interest: and every Subject taketh himself more highly concerned to give his testimony to the truth on the behalf of his Prince, or on the behalf of his Master, because there is a relation betwixt the Prince and the Subject, and betwixt the Master and the Servant; certainly there must needs lie an obligation upon



upon every Christian who owneth Christ as his Sovereign Lord and Master; to give a testimony unto Christ; it is a testimony for the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth; for him whom we call our Father, whom we own as our Master; every Testimony to the Gospel, and the truth of the Gospel is a testimony to Christ; every testimony for Christ is a testimony for him, who is our Lord, and whom we own, and avow to be our Lord.

3. This obligation ariseth from that gratitude which we all owe to the Lord Jesus Christ; every one looketh upon himself indebted unto him who hath done him good; and there is nothing more usual in that case, then to promise a requital, and to express a trouble that we know not how to make him or her amends, and to express our willingness to it; the testimony of our Lord, is the testimony of him who left his Fathers Throne, and came down upon the Earth, and clothed himself with our nature, and died in our stead, that we might not perish for ever & ever, he ascending up into Heaven, hath left us in charge with his truth, *Philip. 1. 27. ---striving together for the faith of the Gospel, Jude, v. 3. ---that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints.* Now which of you, if you had but an ordinary friend like your selves, who had done you some great and eminent kindness, and left you in charge but to give a testimony unto him and for him, should not think your selves under an obligation to it! Oh! how great is the obligation

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which lieth upon every Christian that liveth in the world to bear his testimony for Christ, if he doth but consider what Jesus Christ hath done for him; shall Christ come and die for us, love not his life unto death, and shall we be ashamed to give a testimony unto him, or to be partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel of our dearest Lord, this ought not to be; if the kindness of a man layeth an obligation upon us, to do what in us lieth to serve him; surely the kindness of the Lord our Saviour layeth a much higher obligation upon us.

4. Another thing from whence this obligation doth arise, is *from the duty incumbent upon us to be conformable unto the Lord Jesus Christ*, we ought to study a conformity to him in his life, and in his death; in his life he commandeth us to *be holy as he is holy*; in his death, thus the Apostle prayeth, *for a fellowship of his sufferings. For this cause was I born, and for this cause did I come into the world, that I might bear witness unto the truth*; and it is particularly said of him, *that before Pontius Pilate, he witnessed a good confession*, 1 Tim. 6. 13. He endured affliction in the first publication of the Gospel; what was the testimony Christ gave but this? that there were a people in the world who were very dear to him, chosen unto eternal life for him, though he was the eternal Son of God, thought fit to cloath himself with flesh, and to die upon the Cross, that he might redeem this people unto himself; now it is our duty to be conformable to Christ,

Christ, conformable to this testimony, not being ashamed of this testimony, conformable also in not being ashamed of Affliction; this yet is advantaged by another consideration: that we are to fill up the Afflictions of Christ, *Col. i. 24. Who now rejoyce in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Christ.* The sufferings of Christ are either those things which he suffered in his own person: Now concerning them, he said, *all is finished*, (the *Papists* vainly dream of the filling up of those sufferings,) or else those sufferings which every good Christian shall suffer in his Mystical Body to the end of the World, and there is much behind of the sufferings of Christ, which we are to fill up, and filling them up, we act both in a conformity unto Christ, who is our Head, and also unto the multitude of the Churches that have gone before us, who have tasted of this Cup, and drank a little of it, but there is much more of these that is yet to be filled up.

5. The Obligation ariseth upon Christians from the nature of the Gospel, and the truths of it, to which we give our Testimony. I have told you before in this Discourse, that every Man and Woman is a Debtor to truth, no Man ought to decline a Testimony unto truth; but now by how much any truths are of greater moment, of greater weight and importance, by so much we are the greater Debtors to them; you have the substance  
of

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of the Gospel in that one Text, 1 Tim. 1.15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners.* He said true, who said that Christians could better want the Sun in the Firmament, than that one piece of the Gospel; the truths of the Gospel are of that high importance, that the comfort and peace of all the Souls of the People of God in this Life, and the eternal Salvation of the Souls of all People in the Life to come, doth depend upon the stability of them; if the truths of the Gospel did not stand firm and fixed, the Souls of Christians are undone to all eternity, there is no foundation of peace for them in this Life, there is no hope of an eternal Salvation for them in that Life which is to come: We stand therefore highly concerned to give a Testimony to these truths; and to be partakers of afflictions in giving a Testimony to those truths, and to that Gospel, upon which so much of our eternal interest and concern doth lye, there is no truth but we owe a Testimony to it, but there are some Propositions of Truth, that are not of that moment, that we should endure affliction for the justification of them; but the truths of the Gospel are of that nature that no Testimony we can give to them can be too high, no affliction we can suffer for them, can be too great.

6. A Sixth Obligation that lyeth upon Christians, is from the station they take up in the World; I shall here enlarge upon Three things;

1. They

1. They are God's *Witnesses*.
2. They are God's *Soldiers*.
3. They are God's *Children* and *Servants*, and Christ's *Members*.

1. Every Christian is the Child of God, the Servant of God, the Member of Christ, now should a Child be ashamed to attest the truth for his Father? or should a Servant be ashamed to attest the truth for his Master? or should a Member be ashamed to attest the truth for its Head? should the Tongue be ashamed to speak for the Head? Which of you that are Parents, if you had a Child that should be ashamed (if called) to speak the truth for you, would not disown such a Child? There is never a Christian but is the Son or the Daughter of God, the Child of God; and his relation to God doth oblige him not to be ashamed of this Testimony.

2. We stand in the *Relation of Witnesses*; 1 Pet. 5. Ch. v. 1. Paul calleth himself a *Witness of the sufferings of Christ*, Acts 1. 8. Christ when he left the Earth told his Disciples, *You shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost be come upon you; and you shall be Witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the Earth.* Indeed good Christians ought some to be special Witnesses, Acts 10. 41. *Not to all the People, but unto Witnesses, chosen before of God.* But every Child of God is the Lord's *Witness*; though there lieth an eminent Obligation upon some, (especially the Ministers of the Gospel) yet every Child of God is to be



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be the Lord's Witness, and to give his Testimony for God.

3. Every Christian standeth in the *Notion of a Soldier*; hence the Apostle speaketh to Timothy to *endure hardship as a good Soldier of Christ*, all Christians are required to *fight the good Fight*, and our *Life upon Earth is but a Warfare*; wherein we are to fight the good Fight, and shall a Soldier decline the Fight, and refuse to be partaker of the Battel? How shall we discharge either the relation of Children to our Father, or Servants to our Lord, or Members to our Head, or Witnesses, or Soldiers, if we shall either be ashamed of the Testimony of Christ, or afraid to be partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel:

7. Another Obligation that is upon us, is from those private Laws that we have laid upon our selves; and that two ways.

1. By our *Baptism*.

2. By our *Profession*.

We are all Baptized, and the Apostle saith, we are *Baptized into Christ*; one part of the sense of which is, that we are Baptized into the profession of Christ; no person is Baptized, but he taketh a Vow upon him to be the Lord's Servant; besides, *our profession is another private Law* that we have laid upon our selves; the name of a Christian is an Obligation upon us to act for Christ, and to serve the Lord Jesus Christ; the Pres-mony you know obligeth the Subject to fight for his Prince; there is no Christian



stian but besides the general Laws that are laid upon him, hath layed a private Law upon himself, both by his Vow and Promise in Baptism, and by his taking upon him the name of a Christian; how doth he deserve the name of a Christian, that is ashamed of the Testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ; how doth he answer his Vow in Baptism, that refuseth to fight under the Lords Banner, and to give a Testimony unto Christ, when he is called thereunto.

8. There lyeth a great Obligation upon us from our duty of conformity to our Fellow-members, we are not only the Members of Christ, but are also Members one of another, Ephes. 4. 25. *For we are Members one of another.* The Church of Christ from the beginning of the World, unto the end of it will be but one, and we ought to be as Members like one another, so that the example of the Saints and Servants of God in all Ages, who have stood up in testimony of the Gospel, or who have been partakers of the Afflictions of the Gospel, layeth an Obligation upon us to go and do likewise; that as we might have a fellowship with Christ in his Death, and in his Testimony, and his Afflictions, so that we might be conformable unto those Saints and Servants of God which have been before us, and to their Testimony; John glorieth in this, and putteth into his Titles, Rev. 1. 2. *Who bare record of the word of God, and of the Testimony of Jesus Christ,* --- He calleth himself, v. 9. --- *Their Brother*

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ther and Companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. --- For the word of God, and for the Testimony of Christ, Rev. 6. 9. The Angel saw under the Altar, the Souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the Testimony which they held. And the seed of the Woman, with whom the Dragon was wroth, are described to be such as keep the Commandments of God, and have the Testimony of Jesus Christ, Rev. 19. 10. The Angel telleth John, --- I am thy fellow Servant, and of thy Brethren, that have the Testimony of Jesus ---

9. A Ninth Obligation that is upon us, not to be ashamed of this Testimony of our Lord; is the reward that such shall have, who shall not be ashamed, and the danger they run that are ashamed. I will put both these together; because the proof of them lieth in the same Texts, Mark 8. 38. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful Generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with the Holy Angels, Matth. 10. 33. But whosoever shall deny me before Men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven, Luke 12. 8. Whosoever shall confess me before Men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the Angels of God. The danger lieth here, that if we be ashamed of Christ, he will be ashamed of us; if we deny him, he will deny us, 2 Tim. 2. 12. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny

ny us. The reward you see is, if we suffer with him, we shall reign with him, *Rom. 8. 17.* If so be we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. If we confess him, he will also own; confess, and acknowledge us before his Father which is in Heaven; this I take to be what every one will grant, that by the very Law of Nature every one is bound to decline that which will bring evil upon him, and to do that which will bring him any valuable and considerable good; so that let us but consider the danger of Christs disowning us, and the good of Christs owning us at the day of Judgment, and we shall easily understand what Obligation lieth upon us, not to be ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord; and to be ready to give our Testimony to him, and to the Gospel; but may some say, who are those whom Christ will own or disown at the last day, and how will Christ disown Men in the day of Judgment?

I suppose you may understand it from some Texts, *Math. 7. 21.* Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven, *Matth. 23. 31, 32, 33, 34.* Our Saviour telleth us, *Math. 7. 22, 23.* Many will say to me in that day, Lord! Lord! have we not prophesied in thy Name? And in thy Name have cast out Devils. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: Depart from me, you workers of Iniquity. And in that Text, *Luke 13. 27. 28.* To begin

to stand without, and to knock at the Door, saying, Lord! Lord! open unto us, and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are: V. 27. --- Depart from me all ye workers of Iniquity, then shall be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth. Consider this, we all must once dye, and after Death come to Judgment; it Men have here disowned Christ and his Gospel, and shall then cry, Lord! Lord! open to us, open the Kingdom of Heaven, do not cast us out of thy sight for ever; Christ will then say to that Man who hath been ashamed of his Testimony: No, Thou wert ashamed to own me, and my despised Persecuted Truths and Servants; now I will not own thee. Christ will say to him depart from me, I know you not; but what is it for Christ to own a Man? You may learn that from that Text, *Matth. 25. 34. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, come you Blessed of my Father, Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from before the foundation of the World.* Now consider with your selves, doth not there lye upon a Man an Obligation to save his own Soul, and to keep himself out of everlasting burning; the same Obligation lyeth upon all Men not to be ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord; but to be partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel; the same Obligation that the Law of nature layeth upon every Man to look to his highest concern, the saving his Soul, the keeping himself in favour with God; I shall add but one thing more.

10. The

10. The last thing from whence this Obligation doth arise, is, from the oneness of the Body of Christ. This should engage us to suffer evil together with the faithful Ministers, and the faithful Professors of the Gospel; that we may shew our selves to be true Members of Christs mystical Body. We see in a natural Body, it is impossible that one Member should suffer and not another; the rest will feel it, though they may not feel that particular pain, which it may be doth fix only in this or that Member; yet there is affliction in the whole Body; the whole Body is disquieted and troubled, though only the Head aketh, or the Tooth, or the like; so will it be in the mystical Body of Christ, though it may be there are but some particular Members of the Body that do suffer, yet there will be never a Member of that Body but will suffer a Sympathy; every Christian will not be slain, will not be imprisoned, or plundered, but if any of them be so evil intreated; all the rest that are true Members of this Body, will feel something of the suffering of those Members that do suffer, saith the Apostle, *is any Man afflicted, and I burn not?* St. Paul commendeth the *Philippians*, *Philip. 4. 14. 15.* *Notwithstanding you have well done, that you did communicate with my affliction. v. 15.* *No Church communicated with me, concerning giving and receiving, but you only.* The Apostle speaketh there as you may judge by the 15th Verse, of a Communicating by giving, and receiving;



receiving; but this was the fruit of the other; the *Philippians* Sympathized with *St. Paul* in his afflictions, and felt his misery; and this made them to communicate with him in that state by relieving of him, and indeed those Professors that do not so communicate with the afflicted Children of God, give a very ill proof that they are the true Members of the mystical Body of Christ; I have opened the Doctrine to you. Let us now consider what improvement may be made of it.

Use 1. What you have heard reflecteth sadly upon them, who refuse to give a Testimony of their Lord: Or,

1. Are ashamed of those who do give this Testimony. You have heard how many Obligations there are upon us to it; but how few are there who are sensible of these Obligations?

2. How many are ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord! ashamed to own those truths which their Lord owned; those truths for the Testimony of which their Lord died, *St. Paul* glorieth of himself, that he was not ashamed of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; for, saith he, *It is the power of God to Salvation*, Heb. 11. 16. — *God is not ashamed to be called their God*, Heb. 2. 11. — *Christ is not ashamed to call them Brethren*. Shall a poor Worm be ashamed to be called the Child of God, or the Servant of God, to be called a Godly Man or Woman; how many Professors had we some years since,

that



that are turned back and gone; a little tribulation and persecution is sent because of the truths of Christ and they are offended. We may say of our times, as the Apostle said to the Hebrews; *None hath yet resisted unto Blood*; and yet how few have we that do resist striving against Sin; I tremble to think of that Text, *Whoever is ashamed of me before Men, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed.* We have too many that think it enough to pray, to hear, to read; but forget this piece of their duty, to bear a Testimony to our Lord; nay how many are there, who are ashamed of those who do give their Testimony; ashamed of the Chains, and Bonds, and Imprisonments, and reproaches of the Ministers and People of God; they are not only ashamed to own the Testimony of the Gospel themselves, and to come in as Witnesses for Christ, but they are ashamed of them who do; but I hope I speak to none here who are of that Complexion.

Use 2. It may be some will say, how shall I know if I walk up to my duty in this particular; if I be not ashamed of the Testimony of my Lord; and be a partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel. I shall give you two or three notes, which are sufficient for this discovery:

1. *When the discredit of the Gospel, maketh you neither to think it beneath you to own the truths of the Gospel, nor those who own and profess it.* There is a time when the Gospel hath a credit in the World; the Prophet Zephaniah

Prophesied of a time. *Zeak. 8. 23.* — When  
 ten men shall take hold one of all Languages of  
 the Nations, and shall take hold of the Skirt of  
 the Scribe, saying, we will go with you, because we have heard that God is with you: That  
 Prophecie is fulfilled under the Gospel, God  
 sometimes giveth the Gospel such a credit  
 in the World, that every one thinketh it an  
 honour to him to be accounted a Christian,  
 this is a time when it is hard to discern  
 whether a Man will be ashamed of the Go-  
 self, but there is another time when the  
 Gospel hath as much discredit, so as it fareth  
 with the strict Professors of it, as it did with  
 the Gospel at first, *Act. 18. 22.* — For as  
 concerning this Sect, we know that every where  
 it is spoken against. Now is the time for a  
 Man to try himself, whether he will be asha-  
 med of the Testimony of Christ; we have  
 seen it in the very times that we have lived  
 in, the Gospel, and the Profession of it hath  
 been a credit unto Men, it hath been Mens  
 greatest honour to profess the Gospel with  
 the greatest strictness; God hath turned the  
 Tables upon us, and we now live in a time  
 when as the Prophet saith, *Isa. 59. 14, 15.*  
*Judgment is turned away backward, and Justice*  
*standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the*  
*street, and equity will not enter. — And he that*  
*departeth from evil maketh himself a prey, —*  
 when it is a reproach to be a godly man,  
 now if at such a time as this, a Man think-  
 eth it beneath him to stand up for the truths  
 of Christ, as doon the Ministers of Christ,  
 and

and give a Testimony for Christ; this Man  
is ashamed of the Testimony of Christ; he  
hated to you before, there is with him  
betwixt being afraid and being ashamed;  
good Christian may be sometimes afraid in  
a day of great temptation, but he is never  
ashamed; but when a Man is ashamed, that  
he thinketh it beneath him to profess  
the truth, or to own the Professors of it;  
this Man is ashamed of the Gospel; but if a  
Christian at such a time findeth his Heart  
cleaveth to the interest of God, and to the  
true Servants of God, though he may be and  
der some temptation of fear, and be not so  
so much as another, it is a great infirmity  
but it is not a being ashamed of Christs Te-  
stimony.

2. When no temptation can prevail upon a  
live a Conversation contrary to the Gospel. Every  
Man is obliged to give a double Testimony  
unto the Lord; a vocal Testimony, and a  
real Testimony; we give a real Testimony  
unto Christ, when we dare practically live  
up to the avowed truths of the Gospel, in  
the vilest and worst of times; it is true we  
are obliged to a vocal as well as a real Testi-  
mony, and a good Christian doth not dis-  
charge his duty in giving testimony to the  
Gospel, by a meer living up to the Rules of  
it; there is something more required of a  
Christian than this: But it is as true that  
neither doth a Christian give a Testimony  
to the Gospel, that openly professeth and  
owneth it in the face of its enemies;

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unless he liveth up to the rules of it; nay indeed that Man who talketh for the Gospel, and liveth not up to the rule of it, giveth a Testimony against the Lord, instead of giving a Testimony for him; what hath any Man to do so, take the Word of God into his mouth, when he hateth to be reformed, and casteth the Law of the Gospel behind his back? But that Man or Woman who truly liveth up to the rule of the Gospel, in Apostatizing and declining times, is not ashamed of his Testimony; though perhaps some fear of temptation may not make him so bold for God as another, yea as some hypocritical and false Professors are. *When a Man is truly afflicted for the sufferings of others, who suffer for the Profession of the Gospel, 2 Cor. 11. 29. If he is weak, and I am not weak, how is he offended, and I burn not?* When a good Christian can say of himself, and say it in truth, what Minister, what good Christian, what companion of Christ is afflicted and persecuted, and I am not afflicted for them? I burn not in their Fires? Now this Sympathy with our Fellow-members, when it is in truth, will discover itself many ways. *It is first discernable in a Man's own Heart, When no circumstance of a Man's felicity or prosperity can palliate his sense of the afflictions of others; you have a notable instance of this in Nehemiah, Chap. 2. v. 1. He was Cup-bearer to the King, and had not used before to be sad in his presence, 10. 21. The King said*

said unto me, why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart, — He answered, v. 3. — Why should not my countenance be sad, when the City, the place of my Father's Sepulchres lieth waste, and the Gates thereof are consumed with fire? It is said, Esther 3. 15. — The King and Haman sat down to drink, but the City Shushan was perplexed. That Man is not a partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, that can sit down to drink, that can be merry at no other times when the interest of Religion is under-foot, but that Man is a true partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, whose Heart burneth for the afflictions of others, who suffer for the truths and Gospel of Christ.

2. Our being a partaker of the afflictions of others is evident; When we do what is required to relieve them: Communicating with their afflictions, and to their afflictions; helping to bear one anothers Burdens, and so fulfilling the Law of Christ, Gal. 5. 22. So then it is the Law of Christ for Christians to bear one anothers Burdens. They should bear them upon their own Spirits, having great sorrow of heart and affliction. They should bear them before the Lord, when ever we go to God, as the High Priest carried upon his Breast, the Names of all the Children of Israel. So we should carry the Names of all the true Professors; and in the first place the Names of all those who suffer for the Name of Christ; and we should help and bear them with our hands



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Remembering those who are bound, as if we were bound with them, forasmuch as we are in the Body.

Use 3. In the last place, Let me perswade with you a little for this duty of not being ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord, nor of any of his Prisoners, and being partakers of the afflictions of the Gospel.

Not to be ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord. Now in speaking to this branch of Application, I will enquire:

To what of Christ this Testimony is due; whether to all Propositions concerning Christ, or to some only.

What kind of Testimony it must be; that it may be accepted of the Lord.

What Arguments ought to prevail with us to partake of the afflictions of the Gospel.

What directions may be alisted in the use thereof.

Q. 3. To what of Christ is this Testimony due?

The proper Object of a Testimony is a Proposition, or a Fact, the truth of one or the other.

Now the Propositions that relate unto Christ are of several natures, of different natures, and of different moment: Some concern the Doctrine of Faith, some concern the Worship of God, some concern the Ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, some concern the Rule of a Christians Life. I know no Proposition of the Gospel, but a Christian is a debtor to, and ought to bear a Testimony

unto;



unto; but yet they are not all of equal import, the nature of Propositions doth very much differ.

1. According to what doth depend upon them.

2. According to the evidence that They have in Scripture.

1. According to what dependeth upon them.

Some Propositions of truth are the foundation; look as it is with the foundation of a House, take it away and the whole Building tumbleth to the ground: So there are some Propositions of the Gospel, that the whole Fabrick of Gospel truths lieth upon them, the whole Body of truth is built upon them, here now the Obligation of our Testimony lieth higher, and riseth higher and further, but there is no truth that we are not debtors unto.

2. According to the evidence that they have in the Gospel; there are different apprehensions concerning truth, for although the Gospel hath revealed all truth, yet not all with the same evidence, so that Christians have differed concerning truth, and every man as he believeth, so he ought to speak, so he ought to live; but the apprehensions that some men have had, that they are bound to give a Testimony to every Proposition of truth which they do in heart imbrace, hath begot a great deal of stir; the Apostle giveth another Rule when he saith, *Hast thou Faith? Have it to thy self before God*; There are some Propositions of which a Christian may have a particular perswasion; and of which

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which he may be very confident of the truth of them, but yet they will not bear the weight of a Testimony to the disturbance of the Church of Christ; now a good Christian ought to regulate his Testimony accordingly.

*Qu. 2. What kind of Testimony is that, which a good Christian is bound to give unto the Lord?*

I will open this to you in seven or eight particulars.

*1. He ought to give a knowing, believing Testimony; there is a Testimony of Faith, and a Testimony of Faction; that Man giveth a Testimony of Faith, that doth in his Heart believe what he with his Mouth confesseth, and as the Apostle saith, as he believeth so he speaketh: So in this case a Christian must speak as he believeth, and when he speaketh and owneth, and defendeth a truth, because he believeth it to be the eternal truth of God, this is a Testimony of Faith; but then there is a Testimony of Faction when a man runs with a multitude to attest a truth, and crieth for it, but understandeth not, and believeth not what he professeth; I would have every Christian not to be ashamed of the Testimony of Christ, but I would have him be sure that it be a Testimony of Faith that he giveth, not a Testimony of Faction; for a man to give a Testimony to truth, if it be in Faction, it is abomination to God, whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin; The word not mingled with Faith profiteth not; and a Testimony*

simony not given in Faith signifieth nothing.  
 Oh! Christians beware of this, that none of  
 you in this day be factious Professors, be  
 not ashamed of the Testimony of your Lord.  
 But first, see that you understand it, see that  
 your selves believe it to be a good Testimo-  
 ny; a Man or Woman will have very little  
 peace or comfort in giving a Testimony to  
 that, which either he knoweth not, or in  
 Heart believeth not; when a Man believeth  
 and therefore speaketh, he speaketh that  
 with his Lips which his Soul hath first exa-  
 mined, and he seeth bottomed in the Word  
 of God, and in Heart agreeth and assenteth  
 to, this is his Testimony; take this note  
 with you in every Testimony, let it be vo-  
 cal or real, let it be a Testimony of Faith,  
 not a Testimony of Faction, and a meer run-  
 ning along with a cry, like the rout of E-  
 phesus, when Acts 19. 32. *Some cried one thing,*  
*some another, for the Assembly was confused;*  
*and the more part knew not wherefore they were*  
*come together.*

It must be a *Loving Testimony*, or it is  
 not accepted, Faith and Love must be the  
 principles of all those actions that do or can  
 speak any obedience unto the Will of God;  
 if a Man receiveth the truth, and not in the  
 love of it, it is of no effect; as whatsoever  
 is not of faith is Sin, so whatsoever is done,  
 and not out of love, is not accepted of God:  
 Love is that which giveth the sweet savour  
 to all our doings, and to all our sufferings  
 for God; If saith the Apostle, *I give all my*  
*goods*

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goods to the poor, and my Body to be burnt, if I have not love, it is all nothing. Let a man give never so great a Testimony to Christ, if he doth not this out of love, it is out of some evil principle of contradiction or faction, or some stubbornness of Spirit, and God accepteth it not; it is not a Christians saying, I am for the true Doctrine, I am for pure Worship, and I am for the Kingly Government of Christ, but his doing this out of a true pleasure and delight in these things, out of a true love to God, and zeal for the glory of God: And this is another thing that I fear in a crowd that give Testimony in an evil time, is that some testify they know not what, so that others testify rather out of a principle of contradiction or fullness, than out of a true principle of love to Ordinances and truths; hence you shall observe, that as in a serene and fair time there are a multitude of Professors that are like Swallows that will stay with the Gospel in its Summer time; so you shall observe there are a multitude of others that in a time of opposition, especially when the Persecution reacheth not high, busie to give their Testimony to truth, which when they may embrace freely they never regard, and make no conscience of; you have an example of both these at home; on the one side we had a company of Professors that have now forsaken us and fled, and embraced this present World; in a time of temptation they are gone away, and you shall observe a multitude

titude of others that cried out lately for Sacraments, and against robbing Christians of the Sacrament of the Supper, the great pledge of Christs Love: Now that none hindred their coming to them, they regard not the Sacrament, both these were sick of the same Disease, they gave or thought they gave some testimony to their Lord, but their Testimony was equally acceptable to God, neither the one nor the other was out of a love in their heart to Christ, and to his truth and ordinances, but meerly out of faction and turbulency of Spirit, or for some base worldly end. I would have you own the Testimony of Christ, I would have you fear being ashamed of it, as you would fear that Christ should be ashamed of you at the day of Judgment; I would have you confess him, as you would have him to confess you, as you would expect he should confess you. But be sure you give your Testimony out of love, as what you know, and in heart truly believe and agree to; so out of a burning love and zeal in your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Our Testimony ought to be a *Judicious Testimony*; it is one thing that God requireth when we swear that it should be in truth, righteousness and judgment. *Thou shalt swear the Lord liveth in truth, righteousness and judgment*; Swearing is an Attestation, a Solemn Attestation of a truth. The Testimony which I am now speaking to is not necessary to be performed by Oath, though we ought



ought not to refuse if called to that, but as it must be to the truth, in righteousness, so it must be in judgment: The judgment that I would have attend the Testimony of which I am now speaking, is not a judgment that the thing is true, the truth of Christ, but that it is a truth of that nature that will bear the weight of such a Testimony too, as it must bear if it bear any; for I must tell you, though truth, all truth be a very sacred pin, yet every such pin hath not an equal degree of strength, and will not bear a like weight; I am afraid we have too loud a Testimony to some truths, which though they may have spoken the faith of Christians, and their love, yet have not spoken the *Wisdom and Prudence of Christians*; such Testimonies were those ~~the~~ Christians gave, *Rom. 14.* For things that were in themselves of an indifferent nature, and yet Christians on either side were too warm. Any Christian is thus far bound to give his Testimony to every truth, as not to deny it.

2. In his own particular practice to own it; but we ought not to make a party for every truth: Now this dependeth upon this great truth. *That though there be no truth of God but we ought to own; and being convinced of to Practise; yet there are some truths of God, as to which God willerh not that we should be contentious;* For God hath given his people a Latitude in them without hazard of their Salvation; and therefore we must give our Testimony to truth with prudence, a prudential



denial judging of the weight and value of a truth, before we give a zealous Testimony to it.

4. Our Testimony must be with *prudence*, Prov. 8. 12. *I Wisdom dwell with Prudence*: Wisdom doth often signify Grace, and truly all true Grace in a Soul should dwell with Prudence, we are commanded to be *wise as Serpents*, and to *walk circumspectly not as fools*, but as *wise*; there is a great deal of prudence to be used in giving our Testimony to our Lord; our Lord himself, if you observe him, did it with *prudence*, and we ought to let our Wisdom dwell with Prudence: This Prudence must not be extended so far, as to deny any necessary truth, or to dissemble so as to declare our selves against it, or not to own it, for it must be such a prudence as is opposed to impiety, if there be a failure in piety, there can be no prudence: Prudence doth not so much respect the doing, or the not doing of the thing, as the manner of the doing of it: In general we then give our Testimony with *prudence*, when we give it without any just offence to Jew, Gentile, or the Church of Christ; a Testimony of our Lord may be spoiled by the height of our Spirit through pride shewed in judging, condemning, and despising of others, or through the boisterousness and the passion of our Spirits, or by our noise and clamours; so that to the prudence of a Testimony there are three things required.

Math. 10.  
16.

1. *Humility in opposition to Pride*: Pride is

a Colloquintida that maketh all our Messes of duty and Service to God bitter, God abhorreth the proud, he abhorreth a haughty and contentious Spirit, he giveth grace to the humble, and he accepteth his Testimony. Paul saith, *Acts 20. 19. He served the Lord with all humility of mind.* — We are bid to put on humility of mind, — *Col. 3. 12. and 1 Pet. 5. 5. To be clothed with humility.* — Humility is our garment, a Christian must do nothing but in humility; in what he doth in the service of God, there must be a vein of humility, and in that part of our service to God where humility is wanting, in that part a Christian always walketh naked, and Men see his shame, a fastidious, scornful contemning sufferer, is no Christian sufferer.

Another thing is meekness with respect to passion: This is often called for, we are bid to put it on, *Col. 3. 12.* And the Minister is to instruct in meekness those that are without. The Apostle beseecheth you by the weakness of Christ; meekness is opposed to frowardness and passion; a passionate Testimony to a truth is at best but an imprudent and indiscreet Testimony; *The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.*

3. A third thing that commendeth a Testimony is courtesy, in opposition to morosity and sourness; when Festus told Paul, *That much Learning had made him mad;* he answered, *I am not mad* most noble Festus: Observe with how much complement Paul speaketh to Festus and others, while he was bearing Testi-

testimony unto the truth of God; the sourness and morosity of a Christians behaviour in bearing his testimony, maketh his testimony more unlovely, and not so prudent as it ought to be.

4. A Fourth thing is *peaceableness*: The Servants of God must not strive; there is nothing more asperseth the Gospel, and the Profession of it, then the imprudence of a Professor of it in the managery of his business.

5. Your Testimony unto God must be *uniform* and *sincere*, it cannot be uniform if it be not sincere; the testimony of the Life must agree with the testimony of the Lips; you know a Witness that contradicteth his testimony, doth by it make his testimony invalid; he that liveth contrary to his Profession, giveth himself the lye; he testifieth with his Lips, but he denieth in his Life. The Apostle telleth us of some, *Titus I. 16.* *They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate.* You shall observe therefore, that when the Devil at any time gave a testimony to a Truth concerning Christ and the Apostles, they constantly refused and would not hear him speak; the testimony of one of the Children of the Devil, is rather a dishonour and weakening of the Truth, than any strengthening and credit, and confirmation; a Man that is Holy in his Life, bearing testimony with his Lips, is a great Servant of God; he by his Mouth

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declareth what he believeth; and by his Life he declareth that he doth indeed not mock and dissemble with the World; but he believeth what he professeth to believe: You shall see in some cases, some foolish Witnesses do more hurt than good; so a Christian may do more mischief than good to the Gospel of Christ, by his owning of it, and professing to it.

6. Let it be a *bold and undaunted Testimony*, he is a good Witness in a cause, who speaketh modestly, and with all due respect to those, to whom he giveth his Testimony, and who agreeeth; and doth not contradict himself, and yet is *bold and courageous, speaking with freedom*: hence you shall find that word *παρρησια* is often used about the testimony that the Apostles did bear to the truth; a free, bold testimony in any cause doth it great service, while the stammering lipping Witness, that useth no freedom in his Speech, rather hurteth a cause, than doth it good; the Scripture speaketh much of, and commendeth a Christians boldness; a boldness in Faith, and Prayer, and a boldness in a bearing testimony to our Lord; when we are not afraid of the Faces of men that would outface the truths of God; a Christian should be bold in the Faith, bold in Prayer, and bold in his Confession.

7. Let your Testimony be a *heartty testimony*, a free, ready, cheerful testimony; God loveth a cheerful giver, (saith the Apostle) indeed in all our Gifts unto God, it is so:  
God

God loveth a freedom and chearfulness of Spirit, we should not be *subpana'd* into a Testimony to our Lord Jesus Christ; indeed we are *subpana'd* by that dreadful Text, *Matth. 9.* A Christian should give a Testimony freely, not to provoke and challenge danger, and dare a Trial, but when he seeth suffering at hand, so that God calleth him to give a *testimony* to him, and to the truths of the Gospel, then chearfulness becometh a Christian, chearfulness as it is opposed to grudging.

8. I will add but one thing more, it should be a *patient Testimony*, *Rev. 19.* St. John giveth this Character of himself; *I John who also am your Brother and Companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,* — Patience under evils is what is often called for in Scripture, and pressed upon the Servants of God, with a great variety of Arguments; by a patient Testimony I understand three things.

1. *A patient continuance in the Testimony of Christ*; a flitting, and incertain Christian in the truths of God, who is of one mind to day, and another mind to morrow, is no good Witness in the cause of Christ, *semper idem* is the true *Motto* of every Christian, of every such Witness, he that is one day of one mind, another day of another, like a Wave of the Sea tossed about, may possibly get to Heaven at last, as through fire, but he is no good Witness for Christ; you know amongst men a good Witness must abide by



his testimony; if he varieth, his testimony is weakned: Therefore Christians are highly concerned to examine *Propositions* well before they profess them, and when they profess them, to think well with themselves before they part with them; a man never is a good witness for the Lord in that point, wherein he hath been incertain himself.

2. It must be a *patient testimony* with respect unto those affronts which he may suffer from men, while he is giving his Testimony, a good and steady Witness in your Courts is not moved by the affronts of any Lawyer that setteth himself to baffle him out of his Testimony; he that is a good Witness in the cause of Christ, must not be affected at the affronts of Men that would baffle him out of his Testimony; he must be patient both as to the flatteries and enticements of enemies, and also as to their frowns and menaces.

3. A patient Testimony must be a *Testimony attended with that patience, which they had need of, who may suffer for giving their Testimony*; for though no Man ought to suffer for bearing Witness to the truth, yet there is nothing more ordinary then for men and women to suffer for giving a Testimony unto truth; and thus now I have shewed you, what kind of Testimony it is, that every good Christian is bound to give unto the Lord. I have but two things more to do; first to encourage you to it by some Arguments; then to direct you in the fulfilling of it; now for  
Argu-



Arguments to perswade you not to be ashamed of the Testimony of Christ, you have heard enough already; I have shewed you a Ten-fold Obligation lying upon you.

1. It is the Will of God.
2. Remember Christ is your Lord?
3. You cannot otherwise shew your gratitude to him, for that Testimony which he gave for you.
4. Thus you shall be conformable unto Christ, and what is behind of the suffering of Christ, shall be filled up in you.
5. Remember the nature of the Gospel, and of the truths of it.
6. Consider the Station which you take up in the World, of a *Witness*, a *Souldier*; a *Child* to our Heavenly Father, a *Servant* to a Heavenly Master.
7. Remember the private Law that you have laid upon your selves.
8. Remember the duty which lieth upon you to be conformable to your fellow members.
9. Remember the danger of forbearing, and the reward of your giving this Testimony.
10. Consider your oneness with the Members of Christ, after all these, what need any further Arguments; yet because we are of our selves not forward unto this, our Hearts are awk, and backward to the partaking of the affliction of the Gospel, and averse to the giving of this Testimony; let me by way of a further Argument in this cause,

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name to you, and press upon you the Arguments which the Apostle useth in this place, and by which he himself presseth this *Exhortation*.

1. The first lieth in those words *κατὰ δύναμιν θεού*, according to the power of God : One great discouragement that is upon our Spirits to keep us in a day of Testimony, that we should not testify, is the fear we should never be able to speak and to give our Testimony. To give a Testimony for our Lord is a noble thing, to receive a Crown, the Crown of Martyrdom, is a great dignity. But when the Lord by his providence seeketh out for us, to set this Crown upon our Heads, we too frequently hide our selves, and the reason is, we distrust our selves, but Christian! fear not, we shall have the power of God; it is a wonderful thing to observe, that the power of God hath been so seen in no other thing as in this; you read of a Testimony that Stephen gave to the Gospel: First a vocal, then a real Testimony, *Acts 6. 9, 10.* And they were not able to resist the Wisdom, and the spirit by which he spake, Stephen had then a dispute with the Libertines. The power and presence of God from the beginning of the Gospel hath been seen in nothing more, than in Gods assistance of his Witnesses, you have a promise, *Luke 12. 12.* For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour, what you ought to say, *Matth. 10. 19, 20.* But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what you shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour,

hour, what you shall speak. For it is not you that speak, but the spirit of your heavenly Father which speaketh in you. Luke saith, When they bring you unto the Synagogues, and unto Magistrates and powers, take no thought how or what thing you shall answer, or what you shall say, for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in that same hour what you ought to say. It is a promise that some have applied to the assistance of God in the performance of other duties, as Prayer, Preaching, &c. and it may be there hath been but an ill use made of that promise; the promise in the first place manifestly relateth to a time of testimony, I do not say but there is a *dabitur in hora*, which those who are much with God in Prayer, and which the Ministers of the Gospel may experience, but that promise respecteth not that so much, as it respecteth men in confession, and their Testimony for Christ; in giving our Testimony for Christ, the Spirit of God shall assist, words shall be given us in that hour, and courage and strength shall be given us in that hour, you shall not give a Testimony for the Gospel, you shall not suffer affliction for the Gospel in your own strength, it shall be according to the power of God, the Holy Ghost shall teach you what to say, and what to do, and you shall experience that it is not you that speak and act, but the Spirit that dwelleth in you, what you do in this case shall be according to the power of God, you shall not spend ineerly upon your own Stock, you shall spend upon

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Christs Stock when you are upon Christs Service, you shall spend upon the fulness of the Spirit of God; and there have been many experiences of those that could never find the presence of God so strong in the consolation of their Spirits, as in that hour; be not therefore ashamed of the Testimony of your Lord, for not only the thing which you testify, is the Testimony of the Lord, but your action in testifying, the testimony which you give shall be from the Lord, the Holy Ghost speaking in you; so that this is a great Argument, it is a standing up for Christ, and the Spirit of God shall use your tongue and your hand.

2. Another Argument the Apostle useth, is *from the nature of the truth to which you testify, and the person for whom you testify*: You testify for the truth, which bringeth eternal Salvation; you testify for him, who hath called you with an holy calling, and he hath done this freely, not according to your works, but according to his own grace, for him who hath abolished Death, and brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel. The Apostle saith, *He was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to Salvation*. I told you before, that every one is a debtor unto truth, there is such a cognation betwixt a rational Soul and Truth, that every rational Soul is a debtor to truth, he is a debtor to own the truth as to himself, and to own the truth as to another; and I told you by how much a truth is of higher importance

portance to our or anothers interest, by so much a Man or Woman is a greater debtor; a Man is a debtor to the truth, when it concerneth but his honour and reputation, and when it concerneth his estate; but much more when it concerneth Life; and so when it is for his Brother, by how much his Brother is more concerned, by so much he is more obliged; and as the nature of the truth raiseth his obligation, so the relation of the person increaseth it; a Man is bound by the Law of charity to give testimony to the truth, on the behalf of his Neighbour, much more on the behalf of his Brother, and higher yet on the behalf of his Father or Mother that begat him and brought him forth, but yet his obligation riseth higher when it is for his Saviour, for him who hath done him the greatest kindness that ever was done, without which he had better never have been born; such is the Testimony that we are bound to give unto Christ: The truth is of highest import, the person is of the highest concern: Oh! be not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God to your Salvation, of the Gospel, which bringeth Life and Immortality to light, you testify for Christ who Witnessed a good confession before Pilate, who hath done more for you than all the friends you ever had in the World could do, for him who hath called you with an holy calling; this is another Argument to enforce this Exhortation, the consideration  
for

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for whom and for what this Testimony is given.

3. Another Argument which the Apostle bringeth here to perswade Timothy not to be ashamed of this Testimony, is *his own example*, v. 12. *For the which cause, I also suffer these things, nevertheless I am not ashamed.*

The Apostle saith, *God is not ashamed to be called their God.* And he saith of Christ, *Heb. 2. 11. He is not ashamed to call us Brethren*: Shall we be ashamed to testify his truth? Shall we be ashamed of the name of his Witnesses? And observe the reason why the Apostle saith he is not ashamed. *I am not ashamed, for I know in whom I have believed, and I am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him.*

4. Let me use one Argument further with you; Blessed be God, we yet can say, as *Heb. 12. 4. You have not yet resisted unto Blood, striving against sin.* There are divers Arguments in that Text to make a Christian valiant in his spiritual fight.

1. That a Christians fight is against sin.

2. That in this fight of Christians against sin, we ought, (if called to it) to resist unto Blood.

3. By how much the lesser the Trial is, that God calleth to us to undergo, by so much the greater obligation is upon us to endure it; all a Christians fight and striving is against sin: He giveth a Testimony to the Doctrine of the Gospel; it is against sin to prevent the coming in of damnable errors, which would sink



sink the Souls of people into eternal ruine and destruction; he giveth a Testimony for the pure Worship of God, it is to keep out Superstition and Idolatry; he giveth a Testimony for the Government of Christ, this is also against sin, against those that say the Lord shall not rule over them or others, but we will rule over you; all our fight, all the resistance that we make is against sin. Now the fight against sin is so noble a fight, that every good man ought to resist unto Blood, rather to die than to sin against God, or to suffer sin to prevail in the World; but now when God doth not call us to lay down our Lives, but only to bear a lower Testimony, there our obligation riseth much higher; if God had called us to lay down our Lives, should we not do it? How much more when the Lord only calleth us to give a Testimony? St. John, Rev. 6. 9. saw them under the Altar, that were slain for the Testimony that they held.

5. Lastly, Consider, you shall overcome by your Testimony, Rev. 12. 11. John saw the Devil overcome by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their Testimony, --- *Magna est veritas*, Truth is a great thing, and it will prevail, look back upon the former Ages of the Church, the Witnesses which God raised up to his Truth in the beginning of the Gospel were very few; the persons seemed contemptible, yet God overcame the whole World by them, and brought the whole World into some professed subjection

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on to the Gospel of Christ, often before the Church had degenerated, many errors prevailed, at last *Poperie* prevailed; then stood up *Luther in Germany*, those that look upon that Story would have thought it impossible that *Luther's Doctrine* should have prevailed in the World; but they overcame by the word of their Testimony, and to that Victory they held, doth the Protestant Religion owe it self: Now this should greatly encourage us not to be ashamed of the Testimony of Christ, it hath ever been victorious, and shall be to the last; it is by the Faith and patience of the Saints and Servants of God, who stood close to their opposers, and managed their spiritual fight, that the Gospel hath obtained, and they ought still to hold fast; for they are sure of victory so long as Christ remaineth King in *Sion*. I shall add but a few words more, and that is to direct Christians what they should do, that they may not be ashamed of their Testimony.

I. Look that you be rooted and grounded in truth; a Tree that is not well rooted, you know is very easily shaken, *Col. 1. 23.* If, (saith the Apostle) you continue in the Faith, grounded and settled---- The truth is to make a Christian that he should not be ashamed of the Testimony of the Lord; he had need of a double ground, he had need be grounded in Faith according to that Text, *Col. 1. 23.* And he had need be rooted and grounded in love according to that Text, *Eph. 3. 17.* --- that

*you being rooted and grounded in love, Col. 2. 7. Rooted and built up in him, and established in the Faith* --- Christians! look to this, every Witness ought to understand the cause well to which he is to give his testimony; many a poor Creature beareth a testimony to they know not what, labour to be rooted in the Faith, rooted in love, and rooted in Christ; that Soul that is filled with the knowledge of truth, and warmed with the love of truth never faileth in an hour of testimony; that Soul that is either ignorant of the ground of that truth which he pretendeth to own and defend, or that wanteth a love for God, never holdeth longer than till he meeteth with a contradiction.

2. Look up to the power of God for your assistance; I told you these words in the Text, *according to the power of God*, might be taken as an Argument to perswade Christians not to be ashamed of the Testimony of the Lord, because the power of the Lord shall be manifested for them; but they may also be interpreted, as signifying that which we ought to have an Eye to in our Testimony, and in our suffering affliction; we have no spiritual enemy we can prevail against in our own strength, our enemies you know are the *World*, the *Flesh*, and the *Devil*; for the *Flesh* the Apostle saith, *Rom. 8. 13. -- If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the Body you shall live.* Never yet was lust mortified by meer moral Arguments, and for the *Devil*, we are bid to take upon us the whole

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whole Armour of God, to resist him, strong in the Faith, and it is the same for the World; *Our help is in the name of the Lord*, and therefore it hath been observed, that none in an hour of Testimony have come off worse than those who have been most confident; our Book of Martyrs telleth us of two that were in prison together, the one was very confident and couragious, and told the other that his fat should fry in the fire next day, the other was very timorous and fearful; the first recanted and denied the truth, the second was burnt at the Stake. *David* might possibly mean it of his external enemies, but he repeateth it thrice; *My enemies compassed me about, but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them; they compass me about, yea they compassed me about; but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them; they compassed me about like Bees, they are quenched as the fire of Thorns, for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.* It must be so as to our spiritual enemies, we shall never prevail, but in the name of the Lord.

3. Remember in your Testimony, *There is more with you, than there is against you:* While we bear Testimony to Christ, God is with us, Christ is with us, the Spirit is with us, all the Holy Martyrs are with us, there is none but sinful men against us; Christ the faithful and true Witness is with you, *Rev. 1. 5. From Jesus Christ who is the faithful Witness;* — He was the first Witness. The Apostle *St. John* saith, *1 John 5. 7. There are*

are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost --- What did the Father witness? *This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.* This is the Lord our righteousness. What did Christ witness? He witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate; he owned himself to be the Son of God, the Saviour of the World, that they that believe on him should not be ashamed; he owned himself to be the object of our Faith, to be the Lord our righteousness; the Spirit testified the same thing, and the Spirit beareth witness for us and in us.

4. Fourthly, Would you not be ashamed of your Testimony; love not the World, nor the things thereof, nor the persons therein, take heed of being swallowed up in the love of creature comforts and enjoyments: How dwelleth the love of the Father in him that doteth on the World? The World taketh off Christs witnesses, both the Men of the World, and the things of the World, you must be fond of none of these.

5. Take upon you the whole Armour of God, of which you read, Eph. 6. 14. Stand therefore having your Loins girt about with truth, and having on the Breast-plate of righteousness, and your Feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, taking the shield of Faith, the Helmet of Salvation, the Sword of the Spirit. Finally pray always with all Prayer and Supplication in Spirit, watching thereunto with all perseverance.

SERM.

## SERM. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Matthew 5. 10, 11, 12.

*Blessed are they which are persecuted for Righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

V. 11. *Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.*

V. 12. *Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you.*

**T**HE Evangelist having in the First Chapter given us our Saviour's Pedigree, brought down to his supposed Father Joseph, and an account of his Birth; And in the Second Chapter of his Motion into Egypt, and return from it: And in the Third Chapter of his Baptism: And in the Fourth Chapter of his Temptations. In the latter part of that Chapter he records his entrance into the publick Ministry, dwelling at that time with his Parents in Nazareth, (which was a City of Galilee) thereabout he first exercised



gised his Ministry, and the Evangelist tells us that great multitudes followed him, as you find in the last Verse of the *Chapter*: In this and the Sixth, and Seventh Chapters, he giveth us an account of the *Sermon* he made to this multitude at the foot of the Mountain, a Sermon which containeth many excellent Doctrines. He beginneth it with pronouncing of several persons Blessed, concerning which blessednesses, these two things are to be observed.

1. That he pronounceth them quite contrary to the common vogue and opinion of the world, especially at that time.

2. As to the performance of those duties wherein most of Christians self-denial is to be shewn, the world blesteth *the rich*, he blesteth the poor; as v. 3. *Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*; The world blesteth the haughty, he blesteth the meek, as v. 5. *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the Earth*. The World blesteth those that *laugh* and *rejoice*, he blesteth those that *mourn*, as v. 4. *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted*. The World blesteth them that are *full*; he blesteth those that *hunger* and *thirst*, as v. 6. *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*. The World blesteth those that are in Power to oppress others, he blesteth those that are persecuted, provided it be for righteousness sake, as in v. 10. *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*.

## Some Discourses concerning

Heaven. Three Propositions will exhaust the sum of these Verses.

Prop. 1. *Revilings of men, persecution and speaking all manner of evil of them falsely for righteousness sake, and for Christs name sake, hath always been the portion of the Servants and Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.* Our Saviour here doth Prophecie it unto his Disciples, and he speaketh it of his Servants under the Law; for saith he, *They did so persecute the Prophets.*

Prop. 2. *Those whose lot this falls to are blessed; and theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Prop. 3. *It is their duty to rejoyce, and be exceeding glad under their persecution upon these considerations.* I shall speak to the First and Second; the two latter will fall in with the Application.

1. *Revilings, and speaking all manner of evil and persecution, was always the lot of the Servants of God, and of the Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

All that I have here to open is, 1. *The true notion of persecution.*

2. *Then I shall shew you, this hath always been the lot of the Servants of God, and of the Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

3. *I will endeavour to shew you the ground of it:* As to the First, I shall endeavour to give you the true notion of persecution in five or six particulars.

*Διωξις* from whence this Participle comes, is a word, that is very frequently used in the New Testament, sometimes it is applied unto

unto things, sometimes unto persons; when it is applied unto things, it signifieth an earnest desire of obtaining the thing, which is set out as the object of it, implying a singular love to it, and desire of it, and it signifieth a good or an evil act, as the thing is good or evil, which we do pursue, *1 Thes. 5. 15.* — follow that which is good — *Heb. 12. 14.* Follow peace with all men, *1 Tim. 6. 11.* — Follow after righteousness, — *1 Cor. 14. 1.* Follow after Charity, — *Rom. 9. 31.* But Israel which followed after the law of righteousness. *II. 5. 11.* Wo unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink. — *Hos. 2. 7.* And she shall follow after her Lovers. When it is applied to persons, for the most part in the New Testament, it signifieth a pursuit after them to do them evil, *Rom. 12. 14.* Bless them which persecute you, bless and curse not, *1 Cor 15. 9.* — I persecuted the Church of God, *Acts 9. 5.* — I am Jesus whom thou persecutest, *John 5. 16.* And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, — And so in many other Texts; it signifieth the following of another, with an earnest desire to do him some harm, and this may be a good and lawful action, or a wicked and sinful action, according to the cause, for it is an usual saying, *Causa, non pœna, facit martyrem.*

2. Therefore the next words must expound this act, for righteousness sake, and again for my names sake; righteousness here doth unquestionably signify the same thing

with goodness, and with holiness; as it is often taken in Scripture for *Christs names sake*, which is the same with *for Christs sake*, 1 John 2. 12. --- *Your sins are forgiven you for his names sake*. It is the same thing which is expressed under several other terms in Scripture, *Math. 10. 18. --- for my sake Math. 16. 25. --- for my sake --- Math. 19. 12. --- for the Kingdom of Heavens sake, --- Mark. 4. 17. --- for the words sake --- Luke 6. 22. --- for the Son of mans sake*. In short, it signifieth that suffering which cometh upon us to avoid sinning against the command of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ; all such suffering is a suffering for Jesus sake, for the Kingdom of Heavens sake, for Christs sake, for the Lords name sake, for righteousness sake.

3. *The Person inflicting the punishment, and the law of man obliging to the punishment doth by no means alter the nature of such a suffering*. If lawful Magistrates, and such as are clothed with just authority, could not be guilty of this sin of persecution; then only *Tyrants*, and *Robbers*, and *Murderers* could be called persecutors; but *Paul* was clothed with a lawful authority, *Acts 9*. Yet he himself saith, that he persecuted the Church of God; the Jews for ought I know had a lawful authority, yet *John. 5. 16. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him*: And if indeed the pursuing of one to do him mischief, because he dares not sin against God, be that which is in holy Writ stiled persecution, this must follow,  
nor

nor can the humane Law excuse it; you know the Jews said, *John 9. 7. 10. We have a Law*, and that they did not pretend a Law when they had none, is plain, for *John 8. 12* is said, *When Pilate heard this saying, he was the more afraid*. The reason of this is, because all the ways of men are regular and true. They are under a higher authority, and must be subjected unto the Law of God, and judged by it; and it is possible that unrighteous judgments may be decreed, *If I could Wo unto them that decree unrighteous decrees*.

4. The command of the Superiour doth not excuse the inferiour agent from the guilt of persecution; nor yet deprive the sufferer from the blessing of him that is persecuted: If a person be pursued for righteousness sake, for the Kingdom of Heavens sake, for doing that which God obligeth him to do, the persecution is as well persecution in the inferiour agents, as in the first causes, and the more superiour agents; the Jews accused the Lord Jesus Christ, they brought him before Pilate; Pilate condemned him, the Jews nailed him to the Cross, did not they who nailed him to the Cross, persecute him? Paul was but an inferiour agent against the Church of God, *Act. 9.* the Letters were from the Magistrate, and the Chief Priests of Damascus, the guilt lieth in the act, in the inflicting of punishment upon such as ought to be really freed from punishment; it is true, he that commandeth, he that counselleth and adviseth is not excused, but much less the next immediate

actor; and this is the most reasonable thing in the World, doth not the Law of man thus deal with offenders: Nay when it excuseth the principal agent, it thinketh it justice to punish severely the *inferiour Minister*; for were there no Minister in wickedness, Superiours could do no hurt; and therefore if any be so vain as to think they are excused, because they are but *Ministers*, and do but execute the Will or Sentence of others, they are mistaken; *Pauls* holding the clothes when *Stephen* was stoned, brought him into the guilt of his death.

§. They are not only persecuted who resist sin unto Blood, and choose Death rather than sin; but they who are reviled and reproached; our Saviour you see putteth all together; blessed are you, when you are reviled and persecuted, and when they shall speak all manner of evil of you, for my names sake. Gal. 4. 29. — He that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit. If you look into the story of *Isaac* and *Ishmael*, it is said *Ishmael* mocked him; thus *Paul* complaineth, Rom. 8. 39. — for thy sake we are killed all the day long, — all kind of suffering to avoid sin is persecution, and those that make them to suffer are persecutors, those that are sufferers are so persecuted, it is true there are degrees both of this and of other sins; but he that smiteth with the Sword of the Tongue, persecuteth as well as he that smiteth with a Sword that is made of Iron; and he who is so smitten, is in the Eye of God.



God persecuted, as well as he whose Life is taken from him : Now I say this hath been the lot of the people of God, of the Disciples of Christ in all Ages, to suffer persecution, to be pursued by wicked and malicious men, both with their Tongues reviling them, and with their hands endeavouring to do them mischief, either spoiling them of their goods, or depriving them of their lives, and that because they will not sin against God.

2. I come now to the second thing ; How this doth appear to have been the portion of the people of God ?

It appears by the whole story of the Scripture, and also all Ecclesiastical story : Take *Adam's* Family immediately after the fall, *Abel* was persecuted by *Cain*, indeed he did not suffer because he would not sin, but because he was more righteous, and had offered up a better *Sacrifice* ; consider *Abraham's* Family, of that the Apostle speaketh, *Gal.*

4. 29. --- *He that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit, Acts* 7. 52. *Which of the Prophets have not your Fathers persecuted ?* But if you come unto the New Testament, and consider the Church of God in that state, you shall find it was persecuted at all hands : First by the *Jews*, then by the *Heathens*, then by false and pretended Christians, as is evident in the example of Christ, in the example of *Stephen* the *Proto-Martyr*, and of Christians ever since : First by the *Jews*, of which you read

in the *Acts of the Apostles*, then by the *Heathens*, which persecution lasted 300 hundred years, till *Constantine the Great*; then by *false Christians*, the *Papists* and others; those that were born after the flesh always persecuted them who were born after the spirit: It may therefore be worth the while, rather to fathom the bottom of this, to understand the reason, why the people of God in all Ages have been the Mark and But of the Worlds envy.

*Reas. 1.* The original cause must be fetched from that Text, *Gen. 3. 15.* where God saith, *I will put enmity betwixt thee and the Woman, and between thy seed and her seed, —* that Text giveth you an account of the reason of a three-fold antipathy or enmity which you find in the World. 1. You see there is a natural antipathy between the nature of Man and a Serpent, though we have little experience of it in *England*: In *Egypt* and *Africa* they are mortal enemies unto Men, and though we have no such exceedingly mischievous Serpents, yet we see men generally averse to them, and shunning them, and seeking to destroy them.

2. There is an antipathy betwixt the Devil and us; you see by daily experience that the Devil is the destroyer, though men serve him, yet he destroyeth them. Witches are the worst of people, they are his slaves, he is their ruine and destroyer at last; and for the people of God, he is continually molesting them. Here is the reason,

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3. There is an antipathy betwixt the seed of the Woman, and the seed of the Serpent; who was the Womans seed but Jesus Christ? Who are the seed of the Devil but wicked men? *You are of your Father the Devil*, saith Christ, *John 8. 44. for his works you do*: But although this be the first and more remote cause, yet there are other proximate and immediate causes, and some of them I shall endeavour to give you an account of.

2. The next cause, is that *Innate hatred of God, and the Image of God which is in every man since the fall*, *Rom. 1. 30.* The Apostle telleth us of the Heathen, that they were *backbiters, haters of God* — This is a fruit of the fall, when Man lost the Image of God in which he was created. No Man hath a natural love for God, or for the Image of God, as they say of the *Basilisk*, that it hath such a hatred to a man, that it will fly upon the Picture of a man, so it is true that every Man and Woman by nature are *Basilisks*; they fly upon God, and the Image of God where ever they see it: Now persecution is but the *daughter of hatred*, and though every one hath not the like rough and harsh nature, so that he is not so furious as some men are; yet it is most certain that no man naturally loveth, yea every man naturally hateth God, and the Image of God; hence the more any one hath of the Image of God upon his Soul, the more he is the object of hatred, and the reason of this hatred lieth in that unlikeness that is betwixt

a man in the state of nature, and a Holy God; a natural man is quite contrary and unlike unto God, our Saviour giveth this very reason, *John 15. 18. If the World hate you, you know that it hated me, before it hated you.*

3. A third reason of it is, *because the works of the people of God do condemn the works of the World.* The Apostle *Rom. 1. 30.* Describeth the Heathen as under the notion of such as are haters of God, so under the notion of proud persons; they are proud; the proud man cannot endure to think that any should be better or do better, or be in a better case or condition than he is; now there is a light of holiness by which the Child of God doth outshine wicked men, and even to rational eyes doth appear more beautiful and comely; as, *John 7. 7. The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth, because I testifie of it, that the works thereof are evil; John 3. 20. Every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd; John 17. 14. ---the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world---the men of the world have so much corruption as will not suffer them to be as good as the Disciples and Servants of God; but they have so much pride, as will not let them be patient to think them better than themselves, or that they should be reported better than they; the truth is, every good man is a Preacher of righteousness, to a sinful world, he preacheth by his conversation, and they will not endure the Sermons that*

that are made by a good example, any more than that which is made by word of mouth.

4. A fourth great reason of the persecution of the people of God by the men of the world, hath been the liberty they have delighted to take in the things of God, and their ambition to bring all others into a Subjection to their humours in it: This upon search will be found to have been one of the most universal causes of persecution at all times; this caused the persecution of the three Children, which threw them into the *Fiery Furnace*; this was that which threw *Daniel* into the *Lions Den*: There was a Law made that no man should pray but only to the King, and *Daniel* could not be tied up to this Law, he is thrown therefore into the *Den of Lions*: This was the cause of *Christ* and his Disciples persecution, they did not observe the *Tradition of the Elders*: The Apostles could not abide by the *Decrees*, which commanded them straitly, that they should preach no more in the name of the Lord *Jesus Christ*; this hath been the cause of all the *Popish persecution*; in short, this always hath been, and always will be a root of violence and persecution of the people of God; the conscience of a man in things of God, is a thing that will not, or cannot be controuled by a humane Law; it is matter of Life and Death, of Salvation and Damnation, and a Christian must act according to the dictate of his Conscience, when it doth not sute with the  
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Conscience of the men of the World, then they fall upon him, and this I say hath continually been a fountain of blood and persecution; I come now to the Application.

Use 1. This may let us see the favour of God to persons, whom the Lord hath spared more than others from this bitter Cup: Some particular periods of time there have been, and some particular Christians there may be in all times, whom the Lord doth more favour than others; I would have such understand that the Lord useth them as *Benjamins*, he sendeth them out a double Mess; the ordinary portion of those that own the Gospel is persecution, God hath promised his people no more, *Mark 10. 30.* --- *Houses, and Brethren, and Sisters, and Mothers, and Children, and Lands with persecution,* --- *2 Tim. 3, 12. All that will live Godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution,* *2 Tim. 1. 8.* Hath the Lord hid thee in the storms and tempests, hath he provided for thee, that thou dost not meet with these trials, that others of the Servants of God have met with, thou hast more abundant cause to bless the name of the Lord, thou seest what severity befalls thy Brother, and the goodness that attends thee.

Use 2. This speaketh unto all the people of God to be preparing for trials: And Secondly, To study their duty under them, that they may as the Prophet speaketh, glorifie the Lord in the Fires; this is a word in season, and therefore I shall take liberty to speak



Speak more fully to both Branches; and that under these two Questions.

Qu. 1. *What is the duty of the people of God, in reference to Persecution, not come upon them, or not to that degree, which it is possible it may come to?*

Qu. 2. *What is the duty of the people of God in reference to Persecution, already come, either upon themselves, or upon others?*

Qu. 1. *What should the people of God do in reference to Persecutions, that are not yet come upon them, or at least not to that degree which they may expect or fear, or which are come upon other Churches, or people of God.* I answer,

1. *Live in a dayly expectation of them; we never worse encounter any evils then those that surprize us; what we live in a dayly view of, usually when it cometh, doth not take so much impressiion upon our Spirits, as the evils that fall upon us at unawares; 1 Pet. 4. 12. Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery Tryal--- do not look upon it as a thing that shall not come, there is nothing so much prejudiceth any man, as putting the evil day afar off, and saying with David, I shall never be moved, when God hideth his face in the least, then we are troubled; look for a time when your goods shall be rifled, when you shall be put into Prison, when you shall be brought to die for*

for the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, there is nothing so pernicious to you as security is. *Job* puts a case to himself; if the Lord should kill me, saith he, yet I will trust in him; say sometimes to your selves, what should I do if God should strip me naked? If I should be put to wander in *Sheep-skins*, and *Goat-skins*, be destitute and forsaken? You have all the reason in the world to expect this at the world; the world *hateth you*, as much as it hated all the Prophets, all the Servants of God in former Ages, who met with this usage from it; why should you not expect it, when the Lord hath said, That *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution*: I say when the Word hath said, that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution; what reason hast thou to say to thy self, I will live godly in Christ Jesus, and yet I shall not suffer persecution? You have not in this Age yet resisted unto blood; but live in an expectation of such a time; that is my first counsel to you.

2. Above all, *Labour to ensure your peace with God*, and get the best evidence for Heaven that you can get; it is the policy of the Princes of the Earth, when they see they shall certainly have a great War with some of their fellow Princes, to make Leagues and Treaties with other Princes, that they may not have them all upon them: I am sure it is great policy for the poor Flock of God in the world; when they see they are like

like to have a War with the world, to give all diligence to make their Callings and Election sure; to have a doubt or any fears of the wrath of God, when the wrath of men boileth high against Christians is a very uncomfortable thing; if ever there be a time for men to wrestle with God in prayer, and to use all their endeavours to ensure their interest in God; it is a time when the world is most likely to quarrel with them, and they are likeliest to have the sharpest contest with men in the world, that so they may not have at once two enemies on their Backs.

3. Labour the mortification of those lusts which may disturb your Souls in an hour of *persecution*; it is the policy of all States, and all Nations, when they fear a War, to weaken that party which when the War comes, they cannot trust to, and to put them out of all Command at least, if they cannot quite quit them of the place; it will be the policy of your Souls, if you would prepare for a time of persecution, to weaken your *lusts* and *corruptions*, if you cannot out them, at least to get them out of Command in your Souls, especially such lusts as will be most subject to betray your Souls; you will say, what are those lusts? What are those corruptions which are most subject to betray us in an hour of persecution; I will instance in some of them.

1. *A love of pleasures*; it is given as the Character of wicked men, 2 Tim. 3. 4. -----  
*Lovers*

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*Lovers of pleasures* --- they spend their years in pleasure, and in a moment go down to the Grave, Titus 3. 3. --- *-serving divers lusts and pleasures:* --- These are things that are very grateful to our nature, but he that harbour-eth them in his bosome, will be very unfit for an hour of persecution; as he said, who saw a brave Building, and Gardens, *These are the things that make us unfit for death;* so truly we may say, these are the things that make us unfit for persecution, they that cannot satisfy themselves without the delight of the Eyes, and without the delight of the Ears, will hardly know how to endure a Prison, or how to endure affliction, which were not affliction if it were not a denial of our pleasures: Study the mortification of your hearts, as to all the pleasures of this Life, *Moses, Heb. 11. 25. chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.*

2. Secondly, Study the mortification of wrath, anger and passion; a time of persecution is a time that will anger us, we had not need be Cholerick and Tetchy in such a time; the want of this is that which maketh Christians in suffering to render evil for evil, reviling for reviling, and to study revenge; passion wonderfully roileth the Soul in an evil day, and keepeth it from bearing the Yoke of God with that quietness, with which it ought to submit to the good pleasure of God.

3. A Third Lust which much prejudiceth us in an hour of persecution is *Pride*, and having an high opinion of our selves; in such a day as this, God is levelling high Mountains, God is humbling all the pride of mans glory; take heed of a heart lifted up, and swelling high in the opinion of your selves, if ever you would endure an hour of persecution.

4. Get your hearts as much mortified to the World as you can. Paul gloried in the Cross of Christ, by which the World was Crucified to him, and he Crucified to the World, Gal. 6. 14. All that persecution can hurt you in, is to divide you from the World, and to imbitter the World to you; it cannot reach you as to your heavenly concern, as to your interest there; so that the looser you stand to the World, both as to your inward affections, and as to your more outward dealings and trading in it, the fitter you will be for such an hour of trial; what signifieth the dividing of him from the World, who is already dead to the World? When the heart is glued to worldly profits, or worldly relations, or worldly employments and business, persecution maketh a great breach; but where the heart is divided from the World as to all these, so as it is not fond of any of these things, it hath no pleasure no delight in them, it can live without them, persecution doth little hurt. There is nothing so commendable to the study of a Christian, as a preparation for persecution, as the loosening

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themselves from *Worldly employments* which are as Nets, and entangle the Soul, and the loosening the Soul from *Worldly enjoyments*, pleasures and profits, from hearty affections to the World; this was that which made the Saints of God take the *spoiling of their goods with joy*; this is that *hating of Father, and Mother, Wife and Children*, which our Saviour so presseth upon his Disciples, it is a not loving of them more than God; a loving them so as we can part with them all, rather than sin against God, and wound our Consciences.

5. *Take heed of any actions by which you may hasten or aggravate persecution*; and make it appear more bitter than it is. Though persecution be the lot of the People of God; yet God should chuse their lot for them, they ought not to carve for themselves, afflictions are in themselves evils, and we may pray against them, and may use means to prevent them, and it is our duty so to do; there are two things that may hasten, aggravate and imbitter persecution to the people of God.

1. *Sinnings against God*. There is no evil in the City which God hath not done; God useth the Sword of Persecutors to avenge his quarrels, take heed then of sinning against God.

2. *Indiscreet, imprudent conversations towards men*. Take heed of any provocative carriages; carry your selves as innocently as you will, the World will be angry with you, take



take heed of making them more angry by things which you are not obliged to do, which if done, will disoblige the Men of the World; there is nothing that more imbitters our crosses to us, than the four reflections of our Consciences upon us under them.

6. *Live in a daily contemplation of eternity, and a viewing of him who is invisible*; it is impossible that any thing should make us willing to cut off the inch of time which we think may be added to our Lives but the view of eternity; that any thing should make us willing to suffer the spoiling of our goods with joy, but a knowledge that we have in Heaven a far more enduring substance; that we should ever be willing to part with our dear and sweet relations, but upon the sight of better company; if the Heathen upon the contemplation of the *Immortality of the Soul*, could be content to make an end of their Lives, surely we may hope, that our contemplation of the pleasures that are at Gods right hand, should dispose and prepare us for the parting with the pleasures of sin which are but for a season; the things which are seen, they are temporal (saith the Apostle) the things which are not seen they are eternal. What was that which made *Jacob* endure the cold nights and watchings, but the sight of *Rachel*. He had a prospect of a *Rachel*; his satisfaction in her, was that which he thought would ballance all at last. The quicker view of e-

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ternity any Soul hath, the cheaper all the World will be unto him.

7. *Labor for a good stock of Faith, Patience and Wisdom.* The more full assent you give to the Proposition of the Word, and the firmer reliance you have upon the Promises, the better you will endure an evil hour; you will easily understand the reason of this, if you consider that persecution lieth in nothing else but in your being straitned, or suffering in things visible and sensible, and faith is the evidence of things not seen. I told you before that persecution only toucheth us in sensible parts, for else indeed they were no afflictions; let me shew you the force and power of Faith in this matter to bring a man into a state fitting for persecution.

1. *Faith sheweth an invisible God.*

2. *It sheweth us invisible things.*

Faith sheweth unto us an invisible God. There is nothing so much emboldneth the Soul to sin, as our not seeing of God; the Fool hath said in his Heart, *There is no God*; no God that hath such an eye to see, no God so omnipotent, no God so strict and severe in Justice, as he is said to be. Now the more a man seeth of an *invisible God*, the more a man despiseth all visible sensible things.

2. Faith sheweth unto the Soul *invisible things*, and those of an infinite transcendency, and supereminent excellency above all things that are visible, 1 Cor. 2.9, 10. --- *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered*

*tred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, Psal. 16. 11. --- at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore, Heb. 11. 16. --- a better Country, Heb. 11. 26. ---- a recompence of reward, Heb. 10. 34. ---- a better and enduring substance.* In all persecution there are two things; *pœna sensus*, *pœna damni*; there is a pain of sense, and there is a smart, in prisons and in death. Now Faith armeth the Soul, shewing him a God more armed to punish him in case of sin, than persecution is armed to make him sin, *Luke 12. 4. --- Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do, (saith our Saviour) but fear him that can cast both Body and Soul into Hell-fire.* This taketh away all the pain of sense in persecution; sense telleth a man the Persecutor can do no more than kill the Body, Faith drowns this, by shewing the Soul a God that hath the Keys of *Hell*, and *Death* in his hand, and that can and will *cast the Soul into Hell fire*; for the pain of sense, it is plain, that Faith devoureth all that, and for the pain of loss, it taketh away that: Is it pleasure that maketh thee loth to endure persecution, Faith sheweth the Soul the pleasures at Christs right hand, where are fulness of pleasures for evermore; is it profit that maketh thee loth to endure persecution? Faith sheweth the Soul a *more enduring substance*, a *recompence of reward which is infinitely above thy pro-*

portion of labour; yea and Faith evidenceth this to the Soul, and giveth the Soul such an evidence of these things, that the Soul hath no more doubt, no more fear of these things, than if it had these other things sensibly before its eyes; therefore labour for a stock of Faith; when I say labour for it, I mean but two things; *study the promises of God, that you may understand them, and the compass of them; pray to God to make them stick to your Souls;* and as this Faith doth it, and hath a great influence upon the Soul to make it valiant in its spiritual fight, so that Faith which is the reliance of the Soul upon the Lord Jesus Christ, hath a very great power and influence; for this teacheth the Soul to rest, and rely upon Christ alone for Salvation, and layeth the strongest and highest obligation imaginable upon the Soul to love the Lord Jesus Christ; and again, to do nothing that may give an offence unto him by disobedience to any of his Commandments.

8. Endeavour to furnish your selves with patience. Patience is either to be considered in the *act*, or in the *habit*; I now speak of the *habit of patience*; a power to exercise patience; patience is usually by Divines said to be *active*, which is a power to wait the good pleasure of God, for the fulfilling of the promise; or *passive*, a power quietly to bear the dispensation of God to us. Both of them are highly necessary.

I. For

1. For the first, a power to wait for God, for the fulfilling of the promise, *Heb. 10. 36, 37. For you have need of patience, that after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise: For, yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.* The staying of the Vision to an appointed time, and Gods not making hast in the fulfilling of the promise, is that which sheweth us the need of this patience.

2. The second is a power to bear the good pleasure of God; and to suffer what is his will. Both these are wonderful needful unto a Soul in an hour of persecution. If you ask me how we shall come by patience, the answer is easie; the *more faith*, the *more patience*, for faith begetteth patience; and because the habits of both are infused by God, Prayer is the great means both to obtain these and all other influences and habits of grace from God. Endeavour to furnish your selves with the grace and habit of patience, patience is the suffering grace.

3. Labour for *spiritual wisdom*. Wisdom is a practical habit which directeth us to use the best means, in order to a good end; this wisdom doth not teach you to deliberate at all about the thing, whether you should suffer or no, but only concerning the *manner* and the *circumstances* of the thing; to do it in the best manner, is as God shall have most honour, and your own Souls most peace and comfort. You know our Saviour

faith, be wise as Serpents, and the Apostle James, to his Exhortation to patience presently subjoineth this of wisdom; *If any of you want wisdom, let him ask it of God;* there is a great wisdom to be used in suffering, 2 Tim. 2. 5. *And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not Crowned, except he strive lawfully.* To this of the Apostle is subjoined, v. 3. *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ.* This point of wisdom to be used in suffering is a large point, and I cannot speak so much to it as I should; I shall only here say that it lieth very much in avoiding needless provocations of our adversaries, either by word or deed; they will be angry do we what we can, but certainly it is the wisdom of a Christian to avoid needless provocations, by suffering as patiently, as meekly, and calmly as we are able.

10. Would you prepare for an hour of persecution? *walk close with God.* Walking holily and closely with God, is the duty of a Christian at all times, both with reference to his eternal Salvation, and in reference to his peace, but never more needful than at such a time, Deut. 23. 9. *You shall find this passage; When the Host goeth forth against thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing.* Israel was not only concerned to take heed of wickedness at all times, but especially then, for fear of provoking God, when the Lords Sword is drawn; *when the Lion roareth, the Beasts of the Forrest tremble;* when



when a man entreth into persecution, he goeth out to Battel; this is our Battel with the world: We do at all times stand obliged to take heed of sin, but more at such a time than at another: Our Lord speaking of his coming, saith, *Blessed is that Servant, whom when his Master cometh, he shall find so doing.* When the Lord letteth loose the men of the world, to execute their rage against the people of God, the Lord doth come in a way of wrath and anger against his own people; you had need at such a time take heed to your selves; every one girdeth his Rayment close to him in a time of Winter, and pulleth his Cloak close about him in a storm; though a Christian standeth obliged at all times to walk close with God, yet if ever he may give himself a liberty and looseness as to a garment of holiness, certainly it should not be in the Winter, it should not be when a storm is coming.

11. Be much in Prayer. As we do nothing in our own strength, so do we much less suffer in our own strength, *Philip. 1. 29. For unto you it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.* It is a gift, and it must be given to us of God for to suffer; all gifts we have from God are obtained by asking; the Lord giveth his holy Spirit unto them that ask it, and reason teacheth us to double our Petitions, and to double our fervour and heat in petitioning, when the mercy we ask is more necessary for us, or at such a time when

when we stand in a more special and particular need of that mercy which we go to God for; our Lord hath taught us this by his example: He went and prayed, and thrice repeated the same words, that is, the same matter of prayer: I say by that example our Lord hath shewed us what is our great duty in such a time to pray to God, either that the Cup may pass from us, or that he would furnish us with grace and strength to glorify God in the fire; thus much for the first Question.

*Quest. 2. What is the duty of Christians, when the hour of persecution is come upon them?*

Here in the first place is a case of Conscience to be spoken to about flight; *Whether it be lawful for Christians to fly in a time of persecution to avoid the storm?*

There have been very different opinions of Divines, some have asserted it *utterly unlawful to fly*; others moderate it, and say, *That before a Christian is taken, he may fly, but if he be taken, they think he ought to stand to it, and not to fly*; others have affirmed it, *as a duty to fly*: I do not think the case is to be spoken to in the general, because circumstances will much alter this case, as to flight, or voluntary withdrawing our selves.

1. *It is lawful for a Christian to fly, when the cause of God cannot be advantaged by his stay, but may be prejudiced; and when particular ties do not oblige him for to stay; our Saviour bids his Disciples, Math. 10. 23.*  
*When*

*When they persecute you in this City, flee you into another: I know some say, that this was only a permission of a duty enjoined the Disciples of our Lord, to the intent the Gospel may be Preached, but there is no question of this, that self-preservation is a duty that we owe to our selves, and the very Law of Nature obligeth to it, when some particular law of God doth not countermand the law of nature; so long as there is any probable hope that the cause of God may be advantaged by our stay, that a man standeth as a stake in a Hedge, take it out and the Hedge falleth, he must not stir; but when the case is so, as a mans stay can no way further the interest of God, he may lawfully withdraw; it is a rule in War, when the Field is lost, no Captain doubteth of providing for himself; so though a man be a Minister of the Gospel, and of great use in a place, yet when he seeth the Church is dispersed, and he can do no good by his stay, there is no question but in this case he may fly and secure himself.*

2. *It is yielded on all hands, That when the persecution is personal, it is lawful for a Christian to avoid the dint of it; when a particular Minister is aimed at, or a particular Christian, and there be others; who (if he be gone) may do his work, and bear up the cause of God; I say in this case, it hath been granted to be the duty of persons to fly in a time of persecution; in short, I take it to be the duty of Christians in such cases to with-*

withdraw, when they can do it without sinning against God, the flight barely considered is no sin, if no other sin attendeth it. If a man hath boasted of his standing and then fly, if a man cannot stir, but he must betray the interest of God in the place where he is, or fail in his discharge of his duty to them whom the Lord hath set him in near Relation to, he may sin. But in the general when a man can withdraw, and by his withdrawing not run into a neglect of any other duty by which he is tied to glorify God, or to do good to the Souls of others, I believe it to be so far from the duty of a Christian not to fly, as it is his duty to fly; I conclude therefore:

1. In the first place, It is the duty of Christians in a time of persecution to stand to it, to endure it until the Lord openeth some door by which they may go out without sinning against God; either deserting the interest of his honour and glory, or their own duty to them to whom the Lord hath set them in near Relation: We may fly if God openeth us a door, but we must not break our selves a Gap, we must see God going before us, and guiding of us, as to what we do; this is to be a good Soldier of Christ.

2. It is doubtless the great duty of Christians in such a time, *to live as winning and obliging a conversation as possibly we can*, that we may not by any Indiscretion pull down any suffering or trial upon our selves. We ought

ought always to remember we are Factors for God, and to walk so as to win others, but especially at such times, when the worlds passions are in a great fermentation.

3. It is unquestionably a great duty of Christians in a time of persecution, to study a charitable frame of spirit, *Math. 5. 44. But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you. You see this in the practice of our Saviour; Father forgive them, they know not what they do: And Stephen praying when he was dying, Lord lay not this sin unto their charge; 1 Pet. 2. 21. For hereunto were you called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow his steps.* Our hearts are very prone to revenge, and the more causelessly we suffer from any, the more our anger riseth, and the more we are prone to study revenge, therefore the mortification of anger in the checking of our passion, is highly necessary to us in such an hour.

4. *We ought not to be solicitous either what to say, or what to do.* Be you only careful of your duty, that you do not bring your selves into trials, that you do not suffer as evil-doers, either with respect to the cause for which you suffer, or to any circumstances relating to it; see that you strive, and strive lawfully, *Mark 13. 11. When they shall lead you and deliver you up, take no thought before*

fore



fore what you shall speak; neither do you premeditate, but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak you, for it is not you that speak but the Holy Ghost. You may be assured that God never calleth you to any work; but he will stand by you; you know who was in the fiery Furnace, Dan. 6. 22. My God hath sent his Angels, saith Daniel, and hath shut the Lions mouths, that they have not hurt me, 2 Tim. 4. 16. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me, v. 17. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me. You have heard of the profession of the Martyrs burning at the stake, they felt no more pain than if they were in a Bed of Roses; study nothing more than how you may be able to glorify God in the fires.

5. Then if ever it is your duty not to be seeking great things for your selves in this life, Jer. 45. 5. Seekest thou great things for thy self? seek them not. --- A Christian should order his Conversation in Conformity to Gods dispensation; he should not be clothing himself with Ornaments, when God is stripping of him; he should not then be furnishing his house with fine things, when Gods providence is stripping of him naked; he should not then be perfuming himself with sweet smells, when the Lord is sending him a stench and rents.

6. Then, if ever, a Christian stands most highly concerned to fill his thoughts with spiritual objects, to be thinking of the pleasures



sures at Gods right hand, thinking of that substance that shall endure, of that better Country, which God hath prepared for his people.

7. *A Christian ought in an hour of trial, to be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in him, to every one that asketh with meekness, and with fear: If you observe that Text, 1 Pet. 3. 15. It is mixed with the Apostles directions to Christians, how to behave themselves under persecution, a Christian is not bound to bring himself into trouble; but if the Lord hath spread his Net over him that he cannot escape; if the Lord hath hedged up his way with Thorns, he ought to be ready to give an account of his Faith, and of his hope to them that ask him: Peter failed in this, who denied that he knew the man of whom the Maid spake; but I pray observe, there is a difference to be put betwixt a Confession of our Faith, and a Confession of a Fact; I do not think that in a matter of Fact a Christian is bound to betray himself: When Pilate asked our Saviour, *Math. 27. 11. Art thou the King of the Jews?* Jesus said unto him: *Thou sayest.* But this is not all, we are not only to be ready to give a reason of our Faith, or of our hope, but we must do it with *meekness and with fear*, in an humble manner, with that due reverence which is due unto those, whom the Lord hath set in a station above us.*

8. We are not to be ashamed of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of his words,  
*Mark*

## Some Discourses concerning

Mark 8. 38. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with his holy Angels. Luke 12. 8.

----- Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the Angels of God. And you may find the same thing, Math. 10. 32. The Apostle observeth of our Lord, 1 Tim. 6. 13. That he before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession. Upon which account he adjureth Timothy, that according to his example, he also should fight the good fight, and keep the Faith. Here ariseth a Question.

Quest. What is to be determined in this case; when the Magistrate commandeth that which he ought to command; or which at least he thinketh he may command, and the Christian doth not obey, because he thinketh that in obeying he should sin against God; whether in this case is the Superiours Act Persecution, and the Inferiour persecuted yea or no?

1. I answer, it unquestionably dependeth not upon the Judgment of men, whether the thing commanded be lawful or unlawful, that issue must be determined by God; for God alone is Judge of truth and falsehood, of what is lawful or unlawful; and such pursuits must be determined at the Bar of God, whether they be persecution or not.

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2. It is most certain, *men may persecute others for righteousness sake, and yet think they do that which they ought to do, Acts 26. 9. I verily thought with my self, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, John 16. 2. Whosoever killeth you will think he doth God service. And it is as certain, men may think they suffer for righteousness sake, when they suffer for their iniquity as evil doers, as Priests and Jesuites do.*

3. *When the Superiour thinketh himself bound to do it, he must do it; and where the other thinketh he is bound to suffer, he ought to suffer; yet the one may be punished for doing, the other may be rewarded for suffering.*

4. *When the Magistrate is not bound, but only useth his liberty, though he thinketh the Subject be bound to obey, yet I cannot see how the action shall be excused from persecution, the reason is, the Superiour may forbear his command, the Inferiour cannot avoid his suffering; this is in short, what I think of this case.*

9. *Remember them that are in bonds, Heb. 13. 2. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them. You should remember them in your prayers, Acts 12. 5. Peter was kept in prison, prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him. Rom. 15. 30. -- Strive together with me, in your prayers to God for me. Remember them in your visits. Mat 25. 36. -- I was sick, and you visited me. Remember*

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them

them with your purses. In the Primitive Church Christians upon this account had all things common, *Acts 4.34*. For as many as were possessors of lands, or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things which were sold. *2 Cor. 8. 14*. That now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want. *Phil. 4. 15*. No Church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but you only. There is yet one piece of duty behind, and that our Saviour here hinteth; *Rejoyce and be exceeding glad*. Here are three things I shall insist upon.

1. I will open the words to you, and shew you the import of them, what this is to rejoyce, and be exceeding glad.

2. I will answer the Question, *how we can rejoyce and be exceeding glad?*

3. I will shew you the ground upon which a Christian should be exceeding glad. *Rejoyce, faith our Saviour, and be exceeding glad*. Joy is nothing but the satisfaction of the Soul in the union that it hath with some good thing that is present, so as it must necessarily signify these things.

Negatively, 1. A satisfaction of mind in opposition to grief, and trouble, and affliction. Grief is the true opposite to Joy; when we are bid to rejoyce, we are bid not to grieve; for no man can rejoyce and grieve heartily in a breath; persecution is not a thing fit for a Christians tears. Indeed there is nothing fit for a Christians tears but only sin; and so far there may be matter of grief for

us under a persecution, if it hath been brought upon us by our sins, or by our indiscretion; but take it as it is a suffering for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not. He flurs the Crown of Martyrdom that droppeth a tear, or spendeth a sigh upon it: Let men howl and weep that are sent to Gaol, and brought to the Gallows for the satisfaction of their lusts; but let them take heed of grieving, that are only sent to prison, or brought to a stake, for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. *A satisfaction of mind in opposition to discontent, murmuring or repining;* for not only grief, which is directly opposite to our joy, will spoil our mirth, but even a discontent and dissatisfaction will spoil our joy; for joy requireth the satisfaction of the mind, so as it must be at rest, and not tossed up and down with the wayes of many fears and cares. Christians should not be discontented at God's dispensations; they should not grudge, nor murmur, nor repine at God, if he shall please to bring them under such a dispensation as to suffer for his Name sake.

3. It implieth a satisfaction of mind, in opposition to solicitude; as he whose heart is full of grief, or whose heart is full of discontent, cannot rejoyce: So he whose heart is full of carefulness, cannot rejoyce neither. This is that which our Lord cautioneth his Disciples against, *Take no thought of what you shall say*; and this is the reason that



in those fierce and furious times, the Apostle did so caution Christians, *1 Cor. 7. 32. I would have you be without carefulness*, *Phil. 4. 6. Be careful in nothing*, *1 Pet. 5. 7. Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you*. So then, when our Lord calleth unto his Disciples to rejoyce, and to be exceeding glad, he forbiddeth them immoderate grief, murmuring and repining at God's dispensations; and he forbiddeth them solicitous and anxious care, either what they should say, or how they should bear the Cross that the Lord bringeth them under.

2. But Secondly, There is something positive, and this our Saviour doth hint to us by the two words that he useth in this place, χαίρετε, ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, the latter word signifieth a great excess of joy, which doth not keep within the bounds of the heart, but breaketh forth in actions. Divines have observed, that it answereth an *Hebrew* word, which signifieth dancing joyfully, and is used of *David*, *1 Chron. 15. 29. dancing before the Ark*; and this agreeth with *James 1. 2. Count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations*; where temptations signifieth persecutions.

Thus the Apostle, *Acts 5. 41. They departed from the presence of the Council, rejoycing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his Name*. It is the duty of Christians not only not to grieve and be troubled, not only not to be discontented, and to murmur and repine; not only to be free from solicitude and trouble of spirit because of persecution, but



but on the contrary, to rejoyce and to be glad, yea and that with the greatest excess of joy, to leap for joy.

Obj. But will some Christians say, *How should a Christian do this? Can a man rejoyce in evil? Is it not contrary to the very nature of man to rejoyce in an evil? Is it not contrary to whatsoever is the duty of a Christian, to rejoyce in the afflicting hand of God upon him? How then shall a man be glad and rejoyce in persecution, and either answer the Law of Nature, or the Will and Pleasure of God, not taking notice of his dispensations?*

Sol. I answer; First, It is one thing to rejoyce in the affliction, and another thing to rejoyce in the time of the affliction; it is one thing to rejoyce when we are persecuted, and another thing to rejoyce because we are persecuted. God doth not require that of you which is contrary to your Humane Nature; God requireth of no man to rejoyce because he suffereth, but yet he may rejoyce *when he is persecuted*; he may rejoyce that he is thought worthy to suffer.

2. It is one thing to rejoyce in the smart of a persecution, another thing to rejoyce in the cause of a suffering, and the fruit and effect of suffering. God doth not require of any person to rejoyce in the smart of an evil, but only in the cause, and in the fruit of it, which I shall open further to you.

3. It is one thing for a Christian to rejoyce in persecution, as it is a token of God's

anger and displeasure, another thing for to rejoyce in it, as a means by which it pleaseth God to make the Soul of his Saints perfect unto glory. The Apostle tells us, that no affliction is joyous at present, but grievous.

3 Obj. The last Question which remains is, *What ground of solid joy and rejoycing hath a Christian under persecution?*

I shall open this to you in several particulars. I begin with those of the Text.

1. *Because the Lord hath blessed them.* This is matter of joy. Is it not matter of joy to a Christian, that he is in such a condition as he is under a blessing; yea not under a single blessing, but under a treble blessing? Is it nothing to you, Sirs, to be blessed of God, to have him who knoweth the state of every Soul, in whose hand are all blessings, and cursings, and whom he blesseth they shall be blessed, and whom he curseth they shall be cursed? Is it nothing for you to be in such a state, that you are sure you are under the blessing of God, that you are some of those he hath pronounced blessed, thrice over blessed, though you be here some of them who are hated, reviled and persecuted, and spoken evil of falsely for the Lords Name sake?

2. *Yours is the Kingdom of Heaven.* You have a phrase very like this, which will come into consideration; *Great is your reward in Heaven.* I shall not at present consider it in that sense. Our Saviour saith elsewhere, *The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.*  
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The Kingdom of Heaven within us is the Throne of Christ set up in our hearts, 1 Pet. 4. 14. *The Spirit of Glory and of God resteth upon you.* So this shall be an evidence unto you, that the Kingdom of God is set up in your hearts. Thus the words of our Saviour are made good; *It shall be unto you for a testimony.* The Kingdom of Christ is then set up in any Soul, when Christ ruleth, and other things truckle under him and his Law; when a Christian overcometh in a good fight; when he is too hard for the World, that they cannot flatter him into a disobedience to Christ, nor frown him into a disobedience of Christ, it is a sign that Christ sitteth as Lord and as King in that Soul, and the Kingdom of Heaven is within that man; it is a testimony of grace, and that the Spirit of God resteth upon that man, and the Spirit of Glory resteth on that man. *On your part (saith the Apostle) he is glorified.*

3. *Great is your reward in Heaven.* The Papists make a great stir about the term of a reward, as if it must needs be a correlative to a work; but as there is a reward of debt, (as you reward a man that hath laboured for you, and done you some valuable service) so there is also a reward of grace. The Father saith to the Child, if you will do such a thing, I will give you a new Coat; here is a reward given upon the Child's obedience; but yet the Child's obedience doth not earn it. There is a reward of grace, as well as a reward of debt; there is a reward of a work,

which is not always a just reward for a work; life everlasting is promised as the reward of them that suffer persecution; *But our afflictions are, saith the Apostle, but light and momentany afflictions*, though they work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, *James 1. 12.* Is not this matter of rejoycing, that the reward of a man is great in Heaven? *2 Thes. 1. 7.* It is a token to you of rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed.

4. They persecuted the Prophets that were before you. There is a great cause of rejoycing in this.

1. It is no new thing to you; it is but what hath been the Lot of the people of God formerly.

2. As it is no new thing to men, so particularly not to the most eminent Servants of God. Such were the Prophets; nay, the more eminent they were in their Generation, the more they have been brought under this Rod.

3. This administreth further comfort to Christians in suffering, that those who have professed to the same Religion, yet have persecuted those born after the Spirit. The Jews owned the same God, and the same Religion that the Prophets did, yet they persecuted the Prophets. Lastly,

4. It speaketh you the true Members of the Church. You partake of the common afflictions of the Members of it; that our Lord might let them know, that it was no new thing,

thing, he saith, *They persecuted the Prophets which were before you*, that our Lord might let them know they were not too good for persecution, he says, *So persecuted they the Prophets*, who yet were the best of the Servants of God, lest it should be a trouble to them, that persons owning the same Religion, were their Enemies; he saith, *So persecuted they the Prophets*, that he might shew them with whom they had communion in their sufferings, namely, with the Antient Church of God, he saith, *For so persecuted they the Prophets.*

5. I must yet rise one note higher; you are partakers of the afflictions of Jesus Christ; this is a ground of rejoycing; Rejoyce, saith the Apostle, *1 Pet. 4. 13. in as much as you are partakers of Christs sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy, Phil. 1. 20. Christ shall be magnified in my body, Col. 1. 24. Who now rejoyce in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind, of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh. St. Paul, Phil. 3. 10. desired to know him, and the power of his Resurrection, and the fellowship of his Sufferings, being made conformable to his Death. If (saith the Apostle) we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Rom. 8. 17, 18. For I reckon that the sufferings of this life, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.*

Thus far I have discoursed the duty of Gods people relating to an hour of persecution, whether imminent, or already come upon

upon them; but in all persecution, there must be an Agent as well as a Patient.

*Last Use.* Must this be the Lot of the Servants of God, of all those that will live godly in Christ Jesus, to suffer persecution, *take heed your hand be not upon them. Offences must come,* saith our Saviour, *Luke 17. 1, 2,* but woe unto him through whom they come: *It were better for him that a Millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the Sea.* The will of God concerning an event, will not justify the proximate cause or agent in an action; undoubtedly of all sins, there is no sin that is greater in its kind than this.

1. Consider with your selves, by way of comparison, if it be a great sin for a man to do hurt to those that are *innocent*, how much greater must it be to do evil to one, because he doth good? God hath taken a particular charge of *innocent* persons, *Exod. 23. 7.* *The innocent and righteous person slay thou not,* saith God, *Deut. 27. 25.* *Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person,* *Job 22. 30.* *He shall deliver the Island of the innocent.* Now I say, if that stealing from a man that hath done me no harm, or the taking away his goods by violence, or oppressing him be such a guilt in the sight of God, judge how great the sin must be to slay a righteous person, to undo, or do injury to a person meerly because he doth that which is good, and dare not sin against the Lord his God.

2. I would have you consider how much the Lord interesteth himself in the quarrels  
of



of his people, and in their injuries; *He that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of my Eye.* The Lord counteth his people as the Apple of his Eye, as his Jewels. Now for you to plunder the Lord's Jewels, for you to venture to touch the Apple of God's Eye, judge what the issue shall be. When Saul was breathing out threatening, and bringing persecution upon the Church of God, the Lord called unto him out of Heaven, saying, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* And when he said, *Who art thou Lord?* the Answer was, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.* And if the Lord doth so severely take notice of the omissions of doing good to his people, *Mat. 25. 41.* Pronouncing the Sentence, *Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Verse 42, *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:* Verse 43, *I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not.* What do you think the Lord will do to them that take their bread from them, and their garments from them, and are Instruments to throw them into prison?

3. I would have you consider what a dreadful vengeance hath followed them who have been Instruments in persecution in all times. You know how the Lord punished Cain, so as he cryed out, *My punishment is greater than I am able to bear.* You know how the Lord punished Ishmael, Pharaoh and Jezebel, and the Jewish Nation. In short, this work of persecution

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persecution hath been the ruine of all those that have ever medled with it ; Christ, that stone which the builders refused, hath saln upon them, and ground them to powder, *Luke 20. 18.* Precious in the sight of God is the blood of his Saints ; he will requite it. If the blood of a Man slain, doth so defile a Land, *that the Land shall not be purged but by the blood of him that shed it ;* what do you think will the precious blood of the Saints do ? What therefore *Pilate's Wife* said unto him, in her message, *Have thou nothing to do with that righteous person :* So I say, have nothing to do with men that only strive against sin, and put themselves upon suffering in this extremity, rather than they will sin against God ; let others meddle at their perils, but have you nothing to do with them. Take heed of all persecution ; and that you may know what you are to avoid, let me desire you to compare this Text with *Luke 6. 22.* *Blessed are you, when men hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil.*

1. *The root of persecution is hatred ; and he that hateth a man, because he doth not sin, persecuteth.*

2. *The Eldest Daughter of hatred is separating from them, from their company ; let those that have to do with persecution, consider this.*

3. *The third thing is casting out their name, reproaching, reviling, speaking evil of them.*

4. *Another.*

4. Another thing in that which is set out under the notion of persecution, reacheth to *the spoiling them of their goods, of their liberty, and of their lives.* Take heed of it, if God maketh it their lot, yet be you not the Instruments in setting out their lot to them. Executioners of Justice are necessary in a State, yet the Imployment, we see, is what none is ambitious of. *Offences must come.* There must be some to persecute, but *woe be to those by whom they come.* Persecutors are but the Executioners of Divine Decrees and Justice, but they mean not so. God will reckon with them, not for executing his will, but for executing their own lusts of malice and rage. Not many of them die the deaths of other men.

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S E R M. 12.

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2 Cor. 4. 8, 9.

*We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;*

*Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.*

**M**Y Text is made up of Riddles, seeming, but no real contradictions, where several things seem first to be said; then denied, concerning the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Primitive Christians, whose lives, (as the lives of many good Christians)

stians) are still made up of things hardly intelligible to carnal men, who know of no *distresses*, but what are from without, no despair, but that whose object is some muddy earthly good, no forsaking but that of Providence, no destroying but that of the flesh, but yet intelligible enough to those who have tasted how good the Lord is, and who have senses exercised to discern betwixt good and evil. What is said here, hath been true, and is at this day true of many thousands, besides those of whom the Text primarily speaks, for that speaketh only of the Apostles and Primitive Christians, but it concerns us, upon whom the fagg-end of the World is come, and who live in the latter part of the last days. For whatsoever things were written before, were written for our Learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, *Rom. 15. 4.* The things that have been are, and shall be, and there is nothing new under the Sun. There is no temptation hath befallen you (saith the Apostle) but what is common to men.

The second Epistle of St. Paul to the Church at *Corinth*, is thought to have been written soon after his first Epistle to them from *Philippi*, one of the first Cities upon the Coast of *Macedonia*, *Acts 16. 12.* Thither Paul went, *Acts 20. 1, 2.* when he departed from *Ephesus*, after the uproar made at *Ephesus*, *ch. 19.* by *Demetrius*, for fear that by the Gospel coming amongst them, he should lose

lose his Trade of making Silver-shrines for *Diana*. The occasion of the writing of it to those that read it, will appear to be to vindicate himself from the calumnies and aspersions which false Teachers had cast upon him, who charged him with *levity, pride, ostentation*, rendred his person contemptible, &c. as also to acknowledge to them their forwardness in contribution to the Saints, their kind reception of *Titus*, and the good effect his former Epistle had. In this and the foregoing chapter he magnifieth his Office, in opposition to those who had vilified him, as from other things, so from the scandal of the Cross under which he was. You have in the Text,

1. *Paul's external state and condition, or his outward deformity and misery ; he was troubled, perplexed, persecuted, cast down.*

2. *His inward beauty, support and consolation, in those words, Not distressed, not in despair, not forsaken, not destroyed.*

Hence two Propositions are obviously the Propositions of Truth contain'd in this Text.

Prop. 1. *The best of God's people may be troubled on every side, perplexed, persecuted, cast down.*

Prop. 2. *It is their peculiar priviledge, that when they are troubled, they are not distressed ; when they are perplexed, they are not in despair ; when they are persecuted, they shall not be forsaken ; when they are cast down, they shall not be destroyed.*

The

The substance of the first Proposition is no more than this ; That there is no kind, no degree of trouble, to which the most eminent Servants of God are not in this life subjected and exposed. Here are four words in the Text, the signification of which this great Apostle of the Gentiles applieth to himself, the other Apostles, and the Primitive Christians of his Age, which are expressive of this, *ἐλθόντες, ὑπομένοντες, διακονοῦντες, κατὰ βολήν.* All trouble you know is either *External*, or *Internal*, either from the immediate hand of God, or from the just hand of God ; mediately by the wicked hands of men, or from our selves (for we are sometimes our own tormentors.) These words are expressive of all these kinds of trouble. Let me a little open these terms to you.

*Ἐν παντί θλιβόμενοι*, we translate it, troubled on every side. In the *Greek* it is, *In all*, or every (suppose) place, or kind, or thing in every circumstance of our lives. The word is used generally, to signifie any kind of affliction that presseth a man, and so used, *Joh. 16. 33.* In the World you shall have *θλίψις*, trouble : We meet with more than one kind of trouble in the World, derived either from *θλάω*, a word signifying to *break*, or *τείβω*, which signifieth to wear, because trouble and affliction either breaks us in our body, or bodily comforts, or in our spirits, and weareth us ; it signifieth to pinch us (as a shoe pincheth our foot.) The way to Heaven is called, *ὁ δὲ στενὸς ὁδὸς*, a strait way, which



which men must crowd hard to get thorow. God's people are pressed, straitned, pinched, (or as this verse is) troubled, *ἐν παντί*, on every side, in every place, upon all turns, in all the circumstances of their lives, the World would be rid of them, and God would wean them from the World; God therefore by his providence maketh every place, every circumstance of the World uneasie to them, and suffereth the World to break them, and wear them up as fast as may be. God is hastening the time when he will rain Fire and Brimstone on *Sodom*, and he cannot do it till his *Lot* be out: He is therefore by daily providences, calling away his *Lots*, that he may be let alone whiles he executeth Vengeance on his Enemies to the utmost, and not be kept off by their Importunities for one year longer.

2. The next word by which the Apostle expresseth their state is, *ἀνέκιστα*, it signifies to doubt and be in suspence, *Gal. 4.20. John 13. 22. Acts 25. 20.* It is a word that signifies a trouble through an uncertainty of mind, which may not only respect Propositions of Truth, or Promises, but Issues of Providence, which is an uncertainty which Gods people are, and may be at; for *who knoweth what a day may bring forth?* The complexion of providence may be so lowering (to humane sense) upon the Church of God, that the best and wisest of them may be *ἀνέκιστα*, at an uncertainty of mind, not able to determine what God will be pleased

to do either with themselves or with his people (the generality of them) in such or such a Precinct; for though the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against the Universal Church, or all individual Believers, yet they may prevail against a particular Church, or some particular Members of it, so as the wisest men, having no sure word of Prophecy, or Promise to cast Anchor upon, may be *ἄπορρητοι*, in a great doubt what God will do with them, or the Church to which they relate. Criticks derive the word from the privative particle, *α*, which is as much as not, and *ποσ*, *transitus*, according to which notion it signifies *without a passage*. To be in trouble, and to have, and see no way out, in such a condition as the Lepers were when the Famine prevailed in *Samaria*, *2 Kings 7. 4.* If they stay'd there, they saw they must starve, if they went into the City, they must die there, if they went to the Syrian Army, it was a venture whether they would not kill them. These men were now *ἄπορρητοι*, perplexed, and the best of men may be in such a condition as to outward circumstances. In this case *Job* was, *ch. 3. 23.* his way was hid, God had hedged him in. The Church was in such a case, *Lam. 3. 7.* He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out. Though indeed these outward stresses of providence, are not so properly the *ἄπορρητοι*, as the doubtfulness, anxiety, and suspense of mind upon them.

3. A third word by which the Apostle expresseth

expresseth their state is *Διωκόμενοι*, a word both frequently and variously used in the New Testament; as it is applied to *things* or persons, it properly signifies an hot, eager, and violent pursuit of a person or thing, and the humane action expressed by it is good or bad, according to the *Object* or *Cause*, the thing or person prosecuted, or the cause of the prosecution. It is generally (in the New Testament, when it is applied to persons) used to signify the eager and constant prosecuting of persons for Christs sake, or for righteousness sake. So *Mat. 5. 10, 44. ch. 10. 23.* And thus (some observe) that being applied to persons it always doth signify in the *New Testament*.

4. The last word by which their state is expressd, is *καταβαλλόμενοι*, which signifieth *thrown, or cast down*; it doth not signify such a *casting down*, as a man sometimes afflicteth himself with, by a demission of his spirits; and failing in his courage; such a casting down as is mentioned, *Psal. 37. 14. 62. 4.* Thus *Paul* and the Primitive Christians were *cast down* by the tongues & hands too of wicked men, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, such a casting down as the Devil is said to be cast down by, *Rev. 12. 10.* Where the very same word is used that is used here.

So then, the sense of the Proposition is this, That the best of God's people may be broken in pieces, worn with afflictions, in such circumstances, as may cause them, as to their external concerns, to be in great doubt

what to do, great perplexity and suspense, violently, and incessantly pursued by wicked men, who may overtake them, and cast them down from their dignity and excellency. I shall not stay upon the proof of this, which needeth none to those that are but meanly acquainted with the Story of Scripture, and reflect upon the History of *Joseph, Jacob, the Israelites in Egypt, David, Christ, the Apostles*. Nor shall I offer at any Reasons of it. The sweetness lies in the next Proposition.

*Prop. That though they be troubled on every side, yet they shall not be distressed; tho' they be perplexed, they shall not be in despair; tho' they be persecuted, they shall not be forsaken; tho' they be cast down, they shall not be destroyed.*

Here now are four words answering the former four; four good words answering the four former evil words; four words expressing their relief and grounds of consolation, as the other four expressed their misery and afflictions; let us examine also the import of them; and 2dly, see how these Predicates agree with the aforementioned Subjects.

1. The first word is *συνωρυγμένος*, it properly signifieth to be straitned in place, as a man who is crouded up in a narrow room, where he hath not sufficient room or space for his body; thence by a *metaphor* it is used to signify any affliction which beareth any proportion to this, *Rom. 2. 9. ch. 8. 35. 2 Cor. 6. 4.*

12. 10. where it is translated distresses. Now, saith the Apostle, we are indeed troubled on every side, but we are not *straitned as to our minds*; we are imprisoned, but we have yet a liberty in our spirits, they are, and shall be free prisoners; thus *Paul and Silas* were, *Acts 16.* who sang in their prison at midnight. Their bodies were in *little ease*, but their spirits were at great liberty; they were not straitned in their own bowels. There is this Riddle opened; the *θλιβόμενοι*, being in trouble on every side, that referred to their outward man; *ἡ σκευομαρτύριος*, not in distress, that referred to their inward man, to their better part.

2. The second phrase is, *ἐκ ἐξασπόμενοι*, we translate it, *not in despair*, that is, not wholly in despair. The Præposition *ἐκ* in this place increaseth the signification of the Verb *σπόμεναι*, to which it is in this Text opposed; he had said before, that they were in anxiety, in suspense, at uncertainties; but yet (saith he) not wholly at uncertainties; we are at uncertainty what God will do with us as to our bodies, liberties, or outward concerns; but we are at no uncertainty what is our duty, nor what God will do with us as to our souls, as to our spiritual or eternal concerns.

3. The third phrase by which their happiness is exprest, is *ἐκ ἐγκαταλιπόμενοι*, we translate it, *not forsaken*. It is a decompound Verb; the simple Verb signifieth to leave, or to forsake, so, doth the compound. *Crickes* say the

*Decompound* here used, signifieth more, viz. to leave one in distress when he is in the greatest danger. It is used by our Saviour hanging upon the Cross, *Mat. 27. 46. Mark 15. 34. Acts 2. 27. Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell, 2 Tim. 4. 16. All did forsake me, Heb. 10. 25. 13. 5.* In all which places it signifieth a leaving in distress, or in a time of danger. God's people shall not be left in time of danger. But this must be understood of God's special gracious presence, respecting their inward man; for as to the presence of his providence with respect to their more external concerns, they are often left.

4. The fourth phrase is, *ἐκ σπολλούμενα*, we translate it, *not destroyed*, which indeed is the ordinary signification of it, and it never signifies less than *dead*; it often signifieth eternal destruction. We are (saith the Apostle) *cast down* in our honour and reputation, and from the station we have formerly had in the World, but we are not cast into Hell, we are not yet killed, and cast into the grave.

The Proposition then cometh to this; That God will not utterly cast off and forsake his people, when they are in the greatest dangers, and difficulties imaginable; he may seem to forsake them, he may withdraw from them something of his providence which he before afforded them, but he will not wholly withdraw himself from them.

This leadeth me (in the next place) to inquire what tokens of Gods presence, and influences of God upon them, the People



of God have experienced, and may expect in the times of their greatest dangers and difficulty. These are various, few or none possibly have experienced all, and scarce any of Gods People but have experienced some or other of them, and may live in the expectation of them. I will instance in some few.

1. Sometimes they shall *experience the Divine power*. Once have I spoken (saith the Psalmist) & twice have I heard it, that power belongeth unto God. This power is inseparable from the Divine Being, where-ever that is, Omnipotence must be, but as to the exerting of it this or that way, that dependeth upon the will of God. Man doth not necessarily, at all times, exert that power which is at all times in him, and natural to him, but governeth himself by his reason and wisdom, in the use of his power. So doth God, sometimes he is pleased not to shew forth what he could of his power, either in preserving his People from the hands, or out of the hands of their Enemies, he hath wise ends, why he will suffer them to fall into their hands and to be overpowered by them. But sometimes when they are in trouble they shall have the Experience of the *Divine Power*; to keep them from destruction. The Angel of the Lord shall by night open the Prison Doors, and let out the Apostles, *Acts 5. 19*. And knock off Peters chains, and carry him along with him, *Acts 12. 7*. An Earthquake shall arise, the foundation of the prison shall be shaken,

and the Doors opened, and the Apostles bands shall be loosed, *Acts* 16. 26. *Elijahs* enemies shall be smitten with blindness, and led into their Enemies City. God will *make a way* to escape the temptation, *1 Cor.* 10. 13. God will sometimes let his proudest enemies see and know, that wherein they talk, or act proudly, he will be above them. This particular appearance of God is not the object of our faith. It is but what God hath formerly done, and doth still in some particular instances, but not what he hath by promise tied himself to do; thus the Children in *Egypt*, the three Children in *Daniel*, *Daniel* himself were persecuted, but not forsaken, as to the influence of the Divine power for them.

2. But God chuseth not thus at all times to make his *Power* glorious. Sometimes he will make his *wisdom* glorious, they shall seem to be forsaken as to his *power*, his arm shall not be made *bare* for them, but they shall experience the presence of his *wisdom*, and that two ways, 1 *Sometimes taking the wise in their own craftiness.* *Job* 5. 12, 13. *He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot find their interprise, he taketh the wise in their own craftiness and the Counsel of the froward is carried head-long.*

Thus the Jews experienced the presence of God in the case of *Hamans* conspiracy to destroy them all. Infinite instances might be given of this in all ages. 2 *Sometimes he will fit his people sufficiently to deal with them,*

them, *Luke 21. 15. I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your Enemies shall be able to resist.* This was verified as to Stephen, *Acts 6. 20.* Of whom it is said, *Acts 6. 20.* That his adversaries were not able to resist the wisdom, and the Spirit, by which he spake. Hence Christ commanded his first disciples that when their enemies should deliver them up, they should take no thought how, or, what they should speak, for it should be given them in that same hour what they should speak. For (saith our Saviour) it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you, *Matth. 10. 19, 20.* This was eminently made good to the first and most famous Ministers of the Gospel, and hath in its measure been since made good in all succeeding ages, so as plain, illiterate, ignorant creatures; have been able to put to silence the wisest and most learned of their proud, and cruel adversaries.

3. Sometimes the presence of God is seen with his people in giving them a great liberty and freedom of Spirit, so as they have not been *συνεχόμενοι*, straitned in their own bowels; they have been straitned as to room for their bodies, shut up in close prisons, but their Spirits have been at perfect liberty. This liberty of our Spirits is seen in a Well pleasedness, a satisfaction, and contentment with the will of God concerning us. So as we are never less in prison then when we are in prison; and the Truth is, a prison is nothing to him who hath his Soul and spirit at liberty.

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Those who have read any *Martyrologies* have found instances enough of this, how many Servants of God have found in prisons, and under their great variety of sufferings, the greatest freedom of their Spirit, both for doing, and suffering, and from slavish fears imaginable.

4. Sometimes they experience the presence of God with them, giving them courage. This was that *boldness* which the *Sanhedrim* took notice of in Peter and John, *Acts* 4. 13. which made them marvel; and it is said, that they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. God sometimes will not let his people see his power, in delivering them from an evil, nor his wisdom, in countermining their Adversaries; but they shall experience him making them courageous and valiant in the spiritual fight, so as they shall not be afraid at what man can do unto them. Nothing destroyeth a man in sufferings but slavish fears, and dejections; whiles the Spirit of a man holds, he can bear his infirmity; he may be cast down, but he cannot be destroyed. You shall observe it in reading the History of the Church, as recorded in holy writ, or in other Books, that it hath pleased God sometimes to pick out some persons to be his witnesses to some Truths; with these now the presence of God hath not been to cover them, and preserve them from their Enemies, nor yet to deliver them, once fallen into their hands, but giving them a mighty Spirit and courage to go thorough their sufferings. For this

this was the Apostles prayer, *Acts 4. 29. And now Lord, behold their threatnings, and grant unto thy Servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word.* This was Paul's declar'd expectation and hope, *Phil. I. 20. That in nothing he should be ashamed; but that with all boldness (as always) so now, Christ should be magnified in his body, whether by life or death.* Such is reported to have been the courage of Cyprian, when he heard the Sentence of condemnation published against him; *He thanked God for it; and when the Proconsul would have had him to have deliberated upon it, he presently and boldly replied, In re tam justâ nulla est deliberatio,* there was no need of deliberation in so just and righteous a Cause. Such was the Spirit of Basil, when the Emperour Valens threatned him with punishment, and banishment, *Pueris illa textriculamenta propone* (saith he) Scare Children with those Bugbears; you may take my life from me, but the confession of the Truth you cannot take from me.

5. Lastly, (To name no more) sometimes God's not forsaking his people, when they are persecuted, appeareth in consolatory influences. The consolations of God in such an hour are not small with them. Stephen saw the glory of God, and Christ sitting at the right hand of God, when the stones were flying about him to take away his life. Infinite almost are the stories that might be produced out of Ecclesiastical History to this purpose. One (when the fire was put to the wood under him to burning) crying out, *Metbinks you strew Roses under my feet.*

## A Riddle of

*fact.* That of Mr. Samuel, who is reported to have had (the day before his death) one in white appearing to him, and bidding him be of good comfort, after that day he should never hunger nor thirst more. And that of Robert Glover, who is reported to have cried out to his Fellow-Martyr, O Austin! he is come, he is come. And that of Ridley to Latimer, Be of good comfort (said he) God will either moderate the flames, or strengthen us under them. But these stories are endless, and every where occurring in Ecclesiastical History.

*Q.* But will some say, May one that feareth God build upon this? and exercise a Faith in this experience of Paul, as having in it the force of a promise? Are there no instances of the Servants of God, who have been sufferers for his Name sake, and for Righteousness sake, who have despaired and been forsaken?

*Sol. 1.* I answer; When we speak of exercising Faith, we must find some Word of God to be the object of that Faith; for tho God be the object of our Faith, yet we know nothing of God of this nature but in the Revelation of his Word. So as tho God be the primary and remote object, yet the promise is the proximate object.

Secondly; There are general promises of God's presence with his people in danger; such as that, Isa 43. 1, 2. When thou passest thorow the waters, I will be with thee, and thorow the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest thorow the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. Now these



these are the objects of peoples Faith, and every Child of God may repose a sure trust and confidence in God, that they shall as to him be made good, and prove *Yea* and *Amen*.

Thirdly; For particular promises of preserving from dangers, or deliverance out of dangers, or comfort, or courage, it is enough if they be made good to any particular Souls, supposing the promise for deliverance one way or other, in one method or another, to hold sure, we may well leave it to the good providence and wisdom of God, how he will fulfil it, and make it good to us.

4. Lastly; It is not possible that the same Servants of God should every way experience the presence of God with them: If he manifesteth his presence to his people in a way of power or wisdom, preserving them from dangers, or delivering them out of their Enemies hand, how should he manifest his presence in giving them a liberty of spirit, while they are in their custody, or in giving them courage, or ballancing their afflictions with the consolations of his Spirit? Bishop *Ridley* exercised Faith no further than saying, *Either God will assuage the flame, or strengthen us to bear it.* All the people of God cannot exercise a particular Faith in God as to this or that manifestation of his presence; but as to some influence which may amount to a deliverance of them from the evil, or from the *Evil* of the *Evil* they may.

Fifthly; Nor is it impossible but there may be some particular instances of God's people,

people, (but those very rare) whom God (for the punishment of their sins) may have let fall, and abide into, and in their Enemies hands, and may not have found these manifestations of the Divine presence either in the freedom of their spirits, or in a boldness or courage, nor yet in the consolations of his Spirit; but if they go to Heaven, (as all such shall,) tho' it be as thorow fire, they shall there certainly have his presence, and in it joy, and fulness of joy, and that for evermore.

I come now to make some practical application of the preceeding discourse.

USE 1. I shall begin with that of the Apostle, 1 Pet. 4. 12. *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery tryal which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.* The things that have been are, and shall be, and there is nothing new under the Sun. You cannot be the first who have been troubled on every side, perplexed, persecuted, cast down. It is no new thing: There hath no temptation of this nature, there can no temptation befall you, but such as is common to man, 1 Cor 10. 13. Ever since Cain rose up against Abel, and slew him, because he was more righteous then he, and offered up to God a more excellent Sacrifice; nay, ever since God put an Enmity between the seed of the Woman, and the seed of the Serpent, Gen. 3. 15. this hath been in the World. So persecuted they the Prophets, which were before you, saith our Saviour, Matth. 5. 12. Trouble, distress, persecution are things so far from being

ing such as Gods people are exempted from, that they are almost entailed to the preaching and profession of the Gospel. If you *indure chastening* God dealeth with you, as with sons, for what Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not (at least with the rod of the wicked?) But and if you be without chastening. (whereof all are partakers, then are you Bastards, and not Sons. Heb. 12. 8, 9. Seeing then you have but neighbours fare, and indure no temptations but what are common to men, seeing you have but *Godly mens* fare, that the Prophets have been thus treated before you, seeing you have but *Christians* fare; for so they dealt with Christ & his Apostles, seeing you have but the fare of the People and Children of God: Why should you think it strange if any such thing should happen to you, and not rather rejoyce in as much as ye are partakers of Christs sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy, 1 Pet. 4. 13. Wherein are you better or how can you challenge a further priviledge to your selves, then Paul, then the Apostles, then the Saints and Servants of God in all ages of the World?

USE 2. Secondly Learn hence, That Persons are to be judged not from their straits and sufferings, but from the having or wanting the presence of God, in or under their Sufferings. Indeed there is another more certain way of judgment, because more evident to others, that is, the cause of mens sufferings. But upon this doth the presence of God in mens sufferings

ings depend, for though men may pretend to comforts and make a shew of courage and talk of a liberty of Spirit in their Sufferings as evil doers, yet they are but bravadoes, there can indeed no such thing be, God never encouraged any in a sinful act by one single promise, nor by one single act of providence (except barely permissive which is an encouragement taken by a naughty heart, never given by an holy God.)

U S E 3. See here the vast difference betwixt a Child of God and another man, in an hour of trial. Man as man is born to trouble, as naturally as sparks fly upward: And though indeed there be some afflictions that are proper to the Gospel, such as suffering for the owning of the great Truths of it, or adhering to the Righteous ways prescribed and directed in it; yet troubles do not bubble up only from this fountain, but from the generally debauch'd and corrupt Nature of man, which renders *hominem homini Lupum*, every man an Enemy to his neighbour, and makes men like the Fish of the Sea, where the greater devour the less; or like *Birds* and *Beasts*, which we see pecking and butting one at another, though no cause be given. But that which this Text prompts us to observe, is the difference betwixt the Child of God, and another man in the hour of trouble. Both are troubled on every side, or may be so. Sometimes perplexed, hunted and pursued by their Neighbours, or their Enemies; cast down some-  
times.

times. Where is the difference? Hitherto all things fall alike to all men. Here's the difference, others, when they are troubled on every side, are distressed; when they are perplexed, they are in despair; when they are hunted and pursued, they are forsaken also; when they are cast down, they are destroyed; the Child of God is not so: Let us see it in an instance; let us take that of *Saul* and *David*. There was a time when *Saul* was in trouble and distress enough. You have the story, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15. where you find him representing his own case to the Devil raised up by the Witch in the likeness of *Samuel*. What saith he? *I am* (saith he) *fore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by Prophets, nor by Dreams.* He was troubled on every side. Before him were the *Philistines*, and round about him; *Saul* seeth them, v. 5. *He was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled;* he was not troubled only, but distressed. Perplexed he was enough; he would never else have gone to a Witch, when v. 9. he had before cut off them who had familiar Spirits, and the Wizards out of the Land; but he was in despair. The *Philistines* (saith he) *make war against me, and God is departed from me.* He was persecuted, followed close by the Army of the *Philistines*, but he was forsaken. *God* (saith he) *is departed from me.* Now let us look upon *David* in the 30th chapter of that Book, he was not in *Saul's* circumstances. *Saul* was the

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King

King, though was David the Anointed King to succeed him; he fled to Achish, but was turned off from him by the importunity of his Princes, chap. 29. he had but one poor City to hide his head in, and to make his retreat to, that was Ziklag. Whiles David was at Gath, the Amalekites had come, invaded the South, and Ziklag, and had smitten Ziklag, and burnt it with fire, and had taken his Wives, and the Wives of his companions, the Women captives, and carried all away. David comes, ch. 30. 3. and finds the City burnt, the Wives, Sons and Daughters that belonged to him, and to his company, all taken captives, v. 6. He was greatly distressed; for to all this was added another great evil, his people spake of stoning him. What doth David? v. 6. He encouraged himself in the Lord his God. Here was now one answering to St. Paul in the New Testament, troubled on every side, but not distressed: perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. He encouraged himself in his God; is not overmuch cast down, but is comforted; takes courage, and recovereth all again.

The Reason lieth in two things.

1. A wicked man hath no interest in God. He can in an hour of trouble cry out, O God, but he cannot cry out, My God. Nature teacheth men in hours of distress, that Affliction springs not out of the Earth, nor trouble out of the Dunghil; but there is a Supreme Being, who being offended, plagueth the children of men:

Hence



Hence naturally the afflicted person calls upon God after one fashion or another. The Mariners who were carrying *Jonah* to *Tarshish*, in the Storm called each of them upon his God; *Jonah* 1. but the wicked man cannot say, *My God*; he cannot claim a Covenant interest in, and relation unto God, so as he must be in distress, in despair, forsaken, destroyed at all such times, when the help of man is vain; he cannot but think that in an hour of distress, God is saying to him, Now I am come to reckon with thee for all thy oaths, and curses, and blasphemies, by which thou hast blasphemed me; for all thy drunkenness and other debaucheries; now go to thy Lusts which thou hast served in despite of my Commandments, to the World, and to thy worldly Friends, and see if they be able to deliver thee out of my hands.

2. He hath no true habits of *Hope* or *Faith*. There is indeed a God in the World, a God that is able to succour people in all distresses, to relieve them in all troubles; but he hath neither any habit of true *Hope*, or *Faith*, by which he should commit himself to this God, nor any object prepared for his Soul to cast anchor upon; not a Promise in the whole Book of God that he can hope should be made *Yea* and *Amen* to his Soul, for that he is without Christ, in whom all the Promises are *Yea* and *Amen*.

But now the godly man is not so; he is (upon this account) every way as happy as the other is miserable; he is not more ex-

empted from trouble than another man; yea, he is more exposed to trouble; the World which loveth its own, hateth him, because he is not of the World, but God hath chosen him out of the World, imprinted his Image upon him, markt him for his own. To look to be freed from trouble, is a mighty vaine expectation; Man is born to it, Christians indeed are more especially as Sheep designed for the slaughter. A man cannot reasonably wish, desire or hope for a perfect immunity from distresses and troubles, because it is not possible; so as the Child of God's happiness lieth not there, that the fire shall not come nigh him; but here is his happiness, that the fire shall not hurt, shall not consume him. If he be thrown into the fire, God will be with him in the fire; if into the water, God will be with him in the water; the floods shall not drown him. When *the Lord our God, the holy One of Israel is our Saviour, Isa. 43. 1, 2.* we shall not be *in distress, nor in despair, nor forsaken, nor destroyed.* Two things will advantage this *Meditation.*

1. *That we are not afflicted from outward contingencies, but from some inward defects.* Let a mans burden be never so heavy, if he hath but strength enough to bear it, and to go away chearfully with it, it is no affliction to him; let a mans affliction be never so sharp and smarting, if he hath but a consolation that ballanceth it, it takes out the fire of it, and chaseth away the grief and sorrow of it; distressedness of spirit under a calamity, despair and

and casting away of hope, dejection, and demission of Spirits, straitnings in our bowels, the being at a loss in our own thoughts, what to do, which way to turn us, how to get out of our Net, these are the things that afflict us. Man is afflicted from the tumultuousness and unquietness of his own thoughts; let those be at rest, and the affliction of all troubles is evaporated. What signified a prison to *Algerius*, who could subscribe a Letter, *From the delectable Orchard of the Leonine prison?* or a Martyrs fire to *James Bainham*, (who burning in the fire) could cry out, *O ye Papists! you look for Miracles, now see one; I feel no more pain, than if I were upon a Bed of Roses.* Or Death to *Ann Askew*, who being about to die, could subscribe her Letter written by *Ann Askew*, who neither wisheth Death, nor feareth it, and is as merry as one that is bound for Heaven. What signified the threat of starving to *Elizabeth Young*, who had her Answer ready; *If you take away my meat, God will take away my stomach.* I give you but these few of many Instances, to prove that we are not afflicted from outward contingencies, so much as from some inward defects, had we but (like good men) learned to be satisfied from our selves, to be content that God should chuse our Lot for us, had we but learned in all estates to be content, and in all things to rejoyce, no outward contingency could afflict us; so that if God hath cast his Salt into the bitter waters, which bubble up from our own spirits, as from a corrupt fountain,

P 3

fountain, there would be nothing unclean; nothing bitter, nothing afflictive to us. Now if this be the state of a Child of God, that when he is troubled on every side, he is not distressed in himself; when he is perplexed, he is not in despair; when he is persecuted, he is not forsaken; our irregular passions are then corrected, the sting of our deaths is taken out; our deaths are ours; the *Mercury* is corrected, and prepared, and become medicinal instead of being venomous. Our natural passions are corrected either by *Reason*, or by *Grace*; the first working to its due height, doth a great deal toward it. It were no hard matter to give you a multitude of Instances of Heathens in this case, from the operation of Moral Philosophy: But alas! what is the force of that operation, compared with the operation of the Holy Spirit powerfully commanding, and bowing of our Souls to a compliance with the Divine Will, and commending to us the infinite Divine Wisdom in the dispensations of Providence. O the felicity of a Child of God! if the Apostle hath in my Text given a true account of him, he swimmeth like Cork upon the waters of all afflictions, all troubles; you cannot sink him; he lies like Flint in the fire of affliction, and is only purged, and made more clean and bright by it. Evils come to him, as the Prince of this World came to his Lord, but can do nothing against him, because they meet with nothing in him to make them bitter and heavy.

2. Nay here is not all; Afflictions do not only not hurt him, but they prove of exceeding great & high advantage to him, he is not only not distressed, but he is refined, purged, and made more white, they are to him, as the refining pot for the silver and the furnace for the Gold. He is not only not in despair, but his Tribulation worketh patience, and patient experience, and experience hope, such an hope as will not make his Soul ashamed. He is not only not forsaken, but he ordinarily never more experienceth the power, wisdom and goodness of God, even the most high God. He is not only not destroyed, but through much tribulation he entereth into the Kingdom of God; his light and momentary afflictions work for him a far more eternal, and exceeding weight of Glory. And turn unto him for a Testimony, Luke 21. v. 13. But of this argument I may possibly speak more hereafter.

USE 4th. Fourthly, This discourse sheweth the vanity of wicked men, in troubling the People of God. On every side, perplexing, persecuting them and casting them down. They onely satisfy their malice, treasure up to themselves wrath, that's all. It is a pitiful fruit of an Enemies malice, if he cannot break ones Spirit, distress him, put him into despair, destroy him. What did Julian get by all his rage when he was at last but put to it in a rage to throw his dagger up to Heaven and cry, *Vixisti Galilee*, O thou Galilean, thou hast overcome. When wicked men have done their worst if they cannot put Christi-

ans into *distresses*, into *despair*, &c. They must at last cry their enemies are conquerors, yea they are more then conquerours through Christ that loved them. What did that bloody *Bishop Bonner* get by all his rage, when he was forced at last to cry out, *A vengeance on them! I think they love to burn.* Nay their Vanity appeareth yet further in this, they cannot only not break their Spirits, or Spoil their joys, or hopes, but they commonly add to them, Christians ordinarily never finding more peace, more joy in the Holy Ghost, more satisfaction in their own Spirits, more of the presence of God, &c. There are many that can say, before we were hunted, and persecuted, we had more doubts, more fears, of our eternal state, of the truth of our Spiritual habits, since we were thus hunted, God hath not so filled us with his terrors, we have not so many doubts, or fears, we live in a clear view of our own sincerity, and we have learned less to go astray.

USE 5th. Fifthly, this discourse ought to quicken every one to inquire, whether he or she be of those who if they should happen to meet with the troubles mentioned in in this Text, yet might hope to meet with the relief, and support of the Text. You will say to me, how shall we know that? I answer, if we wistly look upon what goeth before, and what followeth after in this Chapter, we shall find it no difficult matter to conclude what we may hope for in a day of trouble



trouble of this nature, 1. See *v. 6.* These that Saint Paul speaks of were such, as that God who commanderh light to shine out of darkness, had shined into their hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. God makes the light of the Knowledge of the glory of God to shine into mens hearts, for a double end. To shew them the truths of the Gospel, and the way to everlasting life that their own Souls may be saved in the day of Christ; hence enlightened, regenerated Souls who were once darkness are said to become *light in the Lord, Eph. 5. 8.* 2. That they may communicate this light unto others either by Doctrine (which is the work of the Ministers of the Gospel) or by an holy and exemplary life, and conversation; upon which account as well others, as Ministers are compared, *Matth. 5.* to a light lighted up in an house, and commanded that their light should shine unto men, that men might see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in Heaven. This is not the priviledge of the latter only, but of the former also; persons, into whose Souls the light of the Gospel hath shined, in the face of Jesus Christ, who have received Christ as their Saviour, believed in him, given up themselves unto him, *Psal. 91.* He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Such as have chosen God for their God, Christ for their Saviour, as have said of the Lord, *he is my refuge and my fortress,*

*ness, my God, in him I will trust.* These are those whom the Lord will deliver from the *snare of the fowler, &c.* And of whom he hath said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

2. Secondly, they are such as suffer in the exercise of that calling to which God hath called them. Paul here speaks of such as had received a Ministry, v. 1. and discharged it faithfully, *not handling the Word of God deceitfully, v. 2.* Such as preached not themselves, but the Lord Jesus, v. 5. God is present with men in their callings, not in their extravagances, if good men will go out of their road they must not expect Gods company, or Christs presence with them. But if they be in the way in which God hath set them, in the station wherein God hath fixed them, and meet with trouble on every side, they may expect that they shall not be distressed, they shall not be in despair, they shall not be forsaken.

3. They must be such as have renounced *the things of dishonesty; And commend themselves to every mans conscience in the sight of God, v. 2.* Such as the life of Christ is made manifest in their mortal flesh. v. 11. A good man may find himself distressed in a day, when trouble is on every side, in despair, when he is perplexed, in a great measure forsaken, when he is persecuted, and may be destroyed when he is cast down, but it must be for some guilt upon his Soul, for some treading awry from the path of the Gospel, for some

some defects and failures, as to his walking with God, *Azariah* the Prophet told *Asa*, and the men of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, 2 Chron. 15. 2. *The Lord is with you, if you be with him; if you seek him, he will be found of you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.* God hath no where obliged himself for his presence with the best of men where they do *humanum pati*; behave themselves not as his Servants, but as the sinful Sons, and Daughters of men; the best of men in some particular acts of their lives may forsake God, and if they do so they may expect that God will forsake them.

USE 6. I shall put up this discourse with two words of Exhortation. 1. *The first to all in general.* To perswade them to get into such a state. 2. To those who are in such a state. So to walk, so to behave themselves that they may be made partakers of so great a blessing.

1. *To all.* What an argument is here now to those as are yet *walking in the flesh*, running on in courses of neglect, and contempt of God; that they would turn out of their roads of sin and wickedness in hither, and be invited by these things which God hath prepared for them that love him; no rational man can expect to live in the World without trouble, which way it shall come, or of what kind or nature it shall be, we cannot tell, but trouble waiteth for every man that lives in the World, some meet with more, some with less; some with  
trouble

*A Riddle of*

trouble of one sort, others with troubles of another sort; all with some. No man No man must look to live without *perplexity* at one time or other. Natural wisdom teacheth all to provide for the worst; you say, the best will provide for it self. There is no such provision, as the getting an interest in God, and in Christ. Christ gathers his people *as the hen gathers her chickens under her wings.* Not only to cherish them, and keep them warm, but to protect them; when the kite cometh the chickens run under the hens wings. *The name of the Lord is a strong Tower, the righteous shall flee unto it, and be at rest.* Prov. 18. 10. Let those that are at rest and ease, in a wise prospect of possible, yea certain future troubles, turn into God, and get under his shadow. God is seldom a refuge and a tower to those who have not chosen him to be so. Let those that are in trouble, and perplexity yet at last be wise. It is not often that it is so, but happy is he whom trouble brings home to God as it did *Manasse*. Better late then never, and our merciful God doth sometimes extend his favour to those who come late in to beg and to receive it. Let the happiness of Gods people invite you to become sharers with them, consider with your selves, what but a God above can remain to a Man, or Woman when troubles are on every side?

2. But to conclude, *This speaketh to the people of God so to live, that this may be their portion.* This is not so much the inseparable priviledge

privilege of a good man, but he may be without it. In answering the objection, before I came to the application of this discourse, I hinted to you, that it is possible that some particular persons, who belong to God, may not find this Text verified in them in a day of trouble, but they ordinarily are such as have been guilty of some loose walking with God; and *Azariah* told *Asa*, though a very holy man, that if he forsook God, God would forsake him. Let me therefore advise some few things, and so shut up this discourse.

I. *Take heed that you pull not trouble upon your selves.* We never have any great comfort in such troubles. This we may do, I mean, pull troubles upon our selves, either by a sinful walking, or by an imprudent, and indiscreet behaviour, *Peter* chargeth those to whom he wrote, that they should not suffer as evil doers, 1 *Pet.* 4. 15. As *Murderers*, or *Thieves*, or *Evil doers*, or busy bodies in other mens matters. A Prince protects and upholds his Servants in what they do by his commission, direction, or order, but not in things they do without it, much less quite contrary to it. And I pray observe, the Apostle amongst other evil-doers reckoneth busy bodies in other mens matters. Mens sufferings for actions done out of their place, their sphere & calling, are always very uncomfortable sufferings. God hath fixed the World in an order, all things though in themselves just & good, yet are not so in the hands of all persons,

persons, several men have their several matters ordered them, by the wise ordination of God, he that meddles in the matters of another is a *busy body*; men by Gods law are to keep their order, and to look after their own Province. Troubles also may be brought upon our selves, by our *Imprudence* in language, or behaviour.

2. Secondly, *Let not your eye be upon any particular manifestation of Gods Presence with you in your troubles.* He is always present with you, by his *essential presence*. Which is inseparably attended with power and goodness sufficient to help and to relieve you, but how he will exert his power and goodness for, and towards you, whether by delivering you from your troubles, or taking the wise in their own craftiness, or giving you an inward freedom and liberty of Spirit, strength, or courage or comfort, this is according to his will, and will be determined by the Divine wisdom. Say no more in your troubles than *Bishop Ridley*; God will either assuage the heat of the fire, or give us strength and courage to bear it.

3. Lastly, Be not wanting, either in the *exercises of your Faith*, or in your *Solicitations of him by Prayer*, these are the acts to be performed on our parts, in order to the obtaining of these and all other promises, for the promises exclude not, nor give any *Supersedens* from the use of all just, and lawful means for the obtaining of the thing promised, but suppose the use of such means,



means, whether Rational or Spiritual. Wait upon the Lord, and keep his way, use lawfull and none but lawfull means, and you shall find God will fulfill his word, and what hath been the portion of Gods people before you shall also be your portion.

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S E R M. 13.

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Luke 21. 13.

*And it shall turn to you for a Testimony.*

**I**N the 19th Chapter you shall find our Saviour having now almost finished his course, going up to *Hierusalem*, to the last Passover that he was at; in *ch. 20.* you read of several things he did there in the Temple. In the fifth verse of this chapter you shall find that some of his Disciples were taken with the brave structure and ornaments of the Temple. Our Saviour *v. 6.* tells them; *That as for those things which they beheld, the days would come in which there should not be left one stone upon another, that should not be thrown down.* This draweth out from the Disciples a curious Question; *Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? Matthew, ch. 24. v. 3.* repeating the same story, saith, that they said unto him, *Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and*  
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of the end of the World? They make three Questions of it, enquiring about the certain time of the *destruction of the Temple, Christ's coming, and the End of the World.* This Question Christ answers there, from the 4th v. to the end of the chapter; and in this chapter from v. 8. to v. 29. a great deal of pains is spent (and possibly to no satisfactory purpose) by many Divines rightly to distribute these signs, and to tell us which of them related to the destruction of *Hierusalem* (which happened within forty years after) and which related to the coming of Christ by his Spirit, in the *days of Pentecost*; and which to the last Judgment yet to come. There is indeed one, v. 20, 21. which can be applied to none but to the destruction of *Hierusalem*, *When you shall see Hierusalem encompassed about with Armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.* But for the generality of the signs given, I am of their mind, who judge that God intended in the destruction of *Hierusalem* to shew a type of the destruction of the world, and that the same which our Saviour gave as signs of the one, he also gave as signs of the other, wars, and rumours of wars, commotions, prodigious signs in the Heavens and the Earth, Earthquakes, &c. There were great plenty of these before the dreadful destruction of *Hierusalem*, and there will be a greater plenty of them before the last & terrible day. Amongst other signs he tells them, viz. *That before all these, that is, before the Earthquakes, and the terrible sights, and the signs from Heaven,*

Heaven, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the Synagogues, and into Prisons, &c. Then it followeth; And it shall turn to you for a testimony. The Proposition of the Text is obvious, the Subject of it lies in the preceding verse, the Pradicate only in this verse.

Prop. The sufferings of Christs Disciples for his Names sake, shall turn to them for a Testimony.

I told you that the Subject of the Proposition lieth in v. 12. there you have their sufferings described under the notion of laying hands on them, persecuting them, delivering them up to the Synagogues, and to Prisons, bringing them before Kings and Rulers, and all for Christs Name sake, which is the only term (relating to the Subject) which needeth explication.

Quest. What is this to suffer for Christ's Namesake? We meet with the term often; Matth. 10. 22. Mark 13. 13. Luke 21. v 17. Matth. 17. 29. chap. 24. 9. Acts 9. 15.

1. To suffer for Christs Name sake, is to suffer for him; for thy sake are we killed all the day long, Rom. 8. 36. It was their fashion, to call Disciples by their Masters Names; thus the Heathens called Plato's Disciples, Platonists, or Platonicks; and Aristotle's Disciples, Aristotelians; hence Christ's Disciples were called Christians. Thus the term is expounded, Acts 5. 41. & 1 Pet. 4. 16. If any man  
Q suffer

*suffer as a Christian.* The very owning the Name and Doctrine of Christ, in opposition to the Doctrines of *Judaism*, or *Paganism*, in those first and furious times, was crime enough; there needed no more to bring a man in question, yea, to bring him to his end, than for him to own himself one of the number of those who were called *Christians*; the Christians were accounted as a *Sect*, and a *Sect* every where spoken against. Thus *John 15. 21.* *All these things will they do unto you for my Names sake, that is, for my sake.*

2. It signifies any publication or profession of the Gospel, according to the place and station wherein a man is set. Thus the Apostles of old, and the Ministers of Christ now, who suffer for Preaching the Free Grace of Christ held forth, and offered to sinners in the Gospel, suffered for Christ's Name sake. Thus the Apostles understood the term, *Acts 5. 28.* when the Jewish Magistrates said to the Apostles, *Did not we straitly command you that you should not Teach in this Name? and behold you have filled Hierusalem with your Doctrine, verse 41.* They departed from the Council, rejoicing that they were thought worthy to suffer shame for his Name.

3. Finally; *He who suffereth for any thing in the Worship of God, or in the practice of Holiness*, wherein he payeth an homage, and yieldeth an obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, and doth any thing *eo nomine*, upon that

that account, because Christ hath required it of him, or forbeareth any thing, because Christ hath forbidden, suffers for Christ's Names sake, that is, for Christ for his Allegiance and Obedience unto him; for my Names sake, is no more than *for my sake*, upon *my account*, that you may keep any Commandment of mine. Hence these two things follow necessarily.

1. That it is not necessary that those who make men sufferers for the sake of Religion, should openly profess that they make them to suffer for *Christ's sake*; they may do the thing, though perhaps they may think they do it not, or at least may not think fit to proclaim their own shame. For men to suffer for Christ's Names sake, is *Persecution*; the guilt of which doth not depend upon mens thinkings, and judgment of their own acts. The Jews indeed, and after them the Pagans, verily thought they ought to do many things *against Jesus of Nazareth*, and therefore made no difficulty of an open owning their cruel and barbarous actions under this notion. But since those two first broods of Persecution have been worn out of the World, there have none risen up confident enough to approve their sayings, and do like unto them.

2. Neither is it necessary to denominate one *persecuted*, that he *should be a sufferer for not obeying some precepts of man*. Nor will all such precepts either discharge Instruments

struments from the guilt of Persecution, or bring those that disobey them, out of the notion of persons persecuted; if it would, the Apostles suffering as evil doers, had had no cause to have gone from the Council, rejoycing that they were thought worthy to suffer shame for his Name, as they did, *Acts* 5. 41. after they had been strictly commanded, that they should not Teach in his Name. But whatever other men may judge for any Man or Woman to suffer for owning Christ, or publishing the Grace of the Gospel, or living up to the Rule of it, is to suffer for the Name of Christ.

But my great business is to open the Predicate in the *Proposition*, and to shew you how such kind of suffering shall turn to God's people for a Testimony. I shall open this under these two Heads.

1. *It shall turn to a Testimony on God's part towards them.*

2. *It shall be a Testimony on their part towards God.* I shall open both these in several particulars.

1. *It shall be a Testimony on God's part to them.* 1. *Of a great honour which God putteth upon them;* this the Apostles understood, tho our sense understandeth it not; therefore it is said, that they went away from the Council, rejoycing that they were thought worthy to suffer shame for his Name, *Acts* 5. 41. When the Persian Emperour asked Haman his Favourite, *What should be done to*  
the



the man whom the King delighted to honour? If a man maketh answer, *Esther 6. 8.* Let the Royal Apparel be brought which the King useth to wear, and the Horse the King rideth upon, and the Crown Royal which is set upon his head, and let this Apparel and Horse be delivered to the hand of one of the Kings most Noble Princes, that they may array the man withal whom the King delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the Streets of the City, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honour. And the King said to Haman, make haste, and take the Apparel; and the Horse, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew. But God takes a quite contrary method; Is there a man whom the King of Kings hath a mind to honour? Let (saith he) the Crown of Thorns be brought forth, which my only begotten Son wore when he walked in humane flesh, and let that be set on his head; and let the Scarlet Robe be brought forth, which they put upon my Son in derision, a little before his suffering, and let that be upon him, and let him be scourged with the Whip with which he was scourged, and the Gall and Vinegar that was given him to drink, and let a company of miscreants deride and scoff him; let the hands that buffeted my Son buffet him, and proclaim this before him; Thus shall it be done to the man whom the God of Heaven delighteth to honour. Paul was one whom God delighted to honour.

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Thou shalt, saith he, be a *Witness* unto all men: A *Minister*, and a *Witness*. It is true, as *Ministers* men are *Witnesses*, but a sufferer is an eminent *Witness*; he is not a meer verbal *Witness*. Hence the *Antients* were wont to call suffering, *The Crown of Martyrdom*; and some say that *Stephen* had his name predictive of this. We read in our *Martyrologies* of a *Female Martyr*, who having a *Child* in her arms, seeing some *Martyrs* suffering, in haste gave it to another, and offered her self to be a *Martyr*, saying, *Crowns are not to be distributed every day*. Amongst men he counteth himself mightily honoured, whom the *King* will make choice of to be his *Champion*. Every sufferer for *Christ* is his *Champion*. What shall we think of that man whom *God* picks out of a whole *Parish*, a whole *City*, to be a *Champion* for him. It is said of *Luther* (that great *Instrument of God*) that in a *Letter* to some persons condemned to die, he thus preferred them before himself. I have made (saith he) a great deal of bustle in the *World*, and done a great deal of work for *God*; but *God* hath not yet done me the honour to suffer for him. It is an honour to be chosen as a *Second* to *Christ*, in incountring the *World*. It is not only a *Testimony* that *God* loveth and favoureth such a man, but it is a *Testimony* that *God* hath put an honour upon him, and made him one of his first threes; such honour have not all his

his Saints; but those that have it are honoured by it.

2. It is a Testimony of great Influences of grace and favour, with which God hath blessed, and will bless them. 1. I say of great Influences of Grace, with which God hath blessed them. God doth not use to cull out young Souldiers to this Combate, they are usually *veterani*; he will not put new Wine into old Bottles, lest they break; he will not have those who are weak in Faith, receiv'd to doubtful disputations; much less those that are weak in Faith and Love doth he call out to sharp Trials and Sufferings; the honour of God is mightily concerned in the Victory of every Christian Combatant: He therefore usually chuseth some to whom he hath given strength enough for the Battel. There is no Soul more jealous of it self, than that Christian who is most sincere. When God calleth such a one out to suffer for his Name, it is a sign that he hath more Faith, more Courage, than he judged himself to have.

2. It is also a further Sign or Testimony to them of some further Influences of grace with which God designeth them. God's prisoners use not to live upon their own charge. As great and Noble Princes use to maintain their prisoners with Bread and Water; so the great God maintains those that are in sufferings for his sake, with Divine Influences proportioned to

their wants. What these Influences are, I have heretofore shewed you upon another Text. One shall have Wisdom, which the Adversaries shall not be able to resist; another shall have an inward Strength and Courage; a third shall have the Consolations of the Spirit of Grace; and that which may confirm us in this, is not only the promise of God, as never to leave nor forsake his people, so more especially to be with them, when they pass through the Waters, and through the Fires; so as the Waters shall not drown them, nor the Fires kindle upon them; but also the concernment of the honour and glory of God in the case. It is not for God's honour that his Combatants should fail. No man goeth to Battel at his own charge, is eminently true of the *good fight* of those that fight the Lord's Battels, not with fleshly weapons, but such as are spiritual; such as God armeth the Soul with in its strivings against sin. So that as a Child of God may at all times build upon that sure promise, *I will never leave you, nor forsake you*; and upon the credit of it have its conversation; at all times, without covetousness; so he may especially build upon it at a time when God calleth him out to suffer for his Names sake.

3. This suffering is a *Testimony* on Gods part towards them, of a great reward, which they shall receive from God either in this life or in that which is to come, Matth. 19. 27, 28, 29.

*Behold*

Behold (saith Peter) we have forsaken all, and followed thee, what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto thee, that ye which have followed me in the Regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken Houses, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for my Namesake, shall receive an hundred fold, and inherit everlasting Life. Mark repeateth the same passage but with some Variation, he saith he shall Receive an hundred fold, now in this time, Houses, and Brethren, and Sisters, and Mothers, and Children, and Lands, with Persecutions, and in the World to come Eternal Life, Luke ch. 18. 30. repeating it, saith, He shall receive manifold more in this present time, and in the World to come life everlasting. As to the reward of another life, they all agree, that is out of doubt. If so be we suffer with him, we shall be glorified together, 2 Tim. 2. 12. If we suffer we shall also reign with him. The sufferings of the people of God are a manifest token of the righteous Judgment of God, that we may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which we suffer, 2 Thes. 1. 5. Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense — To those that are troubled rest; When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels. Sufferings for Christs sake are tokens of Salvation, and that of God, Phil. 1. 28. Suitable to this was the

the vision which St. John had, *Rev. 20. v. 4.* Where he saw thrones and they sat upon them, and Judgment was given unto them, and he saw the Souls of them that were beheaded for the witnesses of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, nor his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads. Or in their hands, and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. It hath been questioned by some whether any but Martyrs shall be saved? And answered, That none shall be saved but either such as have been Martyrs *actu*, or *Voluntate*, either actually, or who have been willing and ready to be so, if God had called them to it. But of this there is no question as to the promise. The only question is, how they receive an hundred fold in this time or (as Luke saith) manifold more at this time; Mark saith with persecutions; this is generally interpreted concerning the internal influences of the Spirit of God upon the Souls of his people, *Solatia promittuntur, non delicia* (saith an eminent Interpreter) God promiseth inward comforts, not sensible or sensual delights. But God often maketh it good of sensible things in this life: As it is said of Job after his long trial of Affliction, *Job 42. 12.* That God blessed his latter end more then his beginning. In his beginning we read his Inventory thus, he had 7000 Sheep, and 3000 Camels, 500 yoke of Oxen, 500 she asses, *ch. 1. 3.* In his latter end all was doubled *ch. 42. 12.* He had

14000



14000 sheep, 6000 Camels, 1000 yoke of Oxen, and 1000 she Asses. So it hath been observed, that God hath strangely blessed those families, whose heads have been sufferers for him. I have particularly heard it observed of those Walloons, who left their country, and fled hither in the time of D' Alva's rage in Flanders. So that often times God giveth manifold more in this life than they lose for his sake, much more sensible comforts: But oftner he gives them an hundred fold with persecutions, that is, if together with their persecutions, they weigh the consolations they have from the Spirit of God; if they set the one against the other, or weigh the one with the other, they are manifold more. And this is that which the Apostle experienced, 2 Cor. 1. 5. *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.* The sum is, sufferings for the name of Christ are a Testimony or a Token to those that suffer, of great rewards which God hath designed them, and prepared for them, either in this life, or in that life which is to come. In this life either with persecutions, mixing their bitter cups with the Sweet consolations of his holy and blessed Spirit to that degree, that the sweet tast shall drown the bitter tast, and they shall have no tast of the wormwood, and the gall. Or when the persecutions are over (for, *Nubeculae sunt & transibunt*, they are but storms, and will go over)

over ) repairing their losses, building them up fairer houses then the fire hath burnt, and giving them better estates then they have lost : Or in the life to come giving them ( as the Apostle calleth it, 2 Cor. 4. 17. ) *a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory; for I reckon, (saith the Apostle, Rom. 8. 18. ) That the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.*

Fourthly. They are a Testimony on Gods part to those that suffer, *That the Lord will destroy their enemies.* Thus Stella expoundeth this Text. *Quod illi impiè contra vos egerunt, & iuste damnentur;* That they have dealt unjustly, and wickedly with you, and shall justly be condemned. This is that which the Apostle saith, 2 Thes. 1. 4. *So that we our selves glory in you, in the Churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions, and tribulations, that you indure, which is a manifest taken of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which ye suffer.* Mark ye! There is one thing of which it is a manifest token, but then it followeth. v. 6. *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God, to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you.* It is a manifest token of that also. Now the reason of this lyeth in the heinous nature of this sin, which ordinarily goeth before unto Judgment. And is *Δανάμις*, a mortal sign in every Soule where

where it is found. A Soul may be sick of lusts of the flesh, sick of intemperance in eating and drinking, sick of incontinence, filthy lusts and uncleanness, sick of other lusts, and yet through grace may recover; such were some of you (saith the Apostle to the *Corinthians*) but now you are *washed*. But it is very rare that a Soul is *sick* of rage and malice against Christ, and his name and gospel, so as it breaks out in overt acts; I say it is very rarely that it recovers. This disease of rage and malice against Christ and his Gospel, which is seen in mens dealings with the publishers, and professors of it, is much like that disease in the body which they call a *Cancer*, which may lurk a great while, and the person may live so long as he can keep it from breaking, but if it once breaketh there is very little hope of long life. God according to his infinite patience beareth a long time with these *vessels* of wrath fitted for destruction; there are thousands in the World, who have this cancerous humour within them who are full of wrath, malice and rage, and hatred of Christ and his Gospel, but they keep it from breaking out into overt-acts, they will think ill enough of God, and Christ, and his ways, and sometimes they will also talk hardly enough; these may live to an old Age, and go down to their Graves in an external peace, having no bands in their death: *Their sins* shall follow after them,  
after

after their lives to judgment, for Jude assur-  
 eth us that the Lord will come with ten  
 thousands of his Saints, to execute Judgment up-  
 on all, and to convince all that are ungodly  
 amongst them of all their ungodly deeds,  
 which they have ungodly committed, and of  
 all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners  
 have spoken against him. But if mens rage  
 break out openly, God ordinarily is more  
 quick with them. There are some of those  
 blood-thirsty, and deceitful men which he  
 hath said shall not live out half their days.  
 It is seldom that God lets pass acts of e-  
 minent injustice, and cruelty. But that  
 he in this life meeteth with the actors of  
 it, and with the same measure which they  
 mete unto others it is meted to them again.  
 But now persecution is the highest species  
 of injustice, for in it there is not only a  
 wrong done to another, that which is not  
 due is given to him, but God is immedi-  
 ately concerned in the case, the wrong  
 is done to him for Gods sake; he is abused,  
 imprisoned, his estate is taken from him,  
 he is imprisoned, tormented; put to  
 death for Gods sake, because he will own  
 his truths, walk in his ways, do what he  
 commandeth him. It is the sin that fills  
 up the measure of iniquity to, and in a Soul,  
*Matth. 23. 32. Fill ye up then the measure of  
 your Fathers.* Nay more then this, see v. 35.  
 there, *That upon you may come all the righte-  
 ous blood, shed upon the Earth from the blood  
 of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zecharias*  
 the

*the Son of Barachias.* It draweth upon men the sins of the same kind committed by their forefathers, and not reckoned for it sheweth, that if they had lived in the days of their *forefathers*, they would have done what they did; they inherit their Spirit. Hence you shall observe, that although in ecclesiastical story we read of persecutions that lasted a long time, yet we read of very few particular persons, that were eminent persecutors that lasted long. When this *Cancer* hath broke out they seldom live long. Gods patience often extends to *Drun-kards*, and *Whoremongers*, and *Swearers*, and *Cursers*, and they often die in the times of other men, and after the manner of other men; they do injury to few but themselves; they shew indeed a contempt of God, and a disobedience to God, but they do not shew a rage and malice against God; their sins do not tend to blot out the remembrance of Christ, and to root out the name of God from the Earth. But he is not so patient with this blackest sort of sinners; they do harm to others, yea to those of whom God hath said, *He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of mine Eye.* They are for rooting out the name, and mention of God from the Earth. God will not bear with these, there shall be something remarkable in their death, either they shall dye in their youth, whiles yet their bones are full of marrow, or they shall not dye the ordinary deaths of men. They shall  
not

not come into the grave *as a shock of corn in its season*, but be weeded out, and cut up before the harvest. If I durst wish evil to to him that hated me, I would curse him in the name of the Lord; I would say let him be a persecutor of others for Christs name sake. Make but your own observation if you have known, or do or shall know any such. So that this sin where-ever the guilt of it doth stick is an evident token, not only of eternal perdition to the adversaries of Christ and his Gospel, but an ordinary token of a destruction in this life. Thus I have shewed, how the sufferings of Gods people turn unto them for a *Testimony* on Gods part, let me shew you in the next place, how they turn unto them for a *Testimony* on their part towards God. I will open that in five particulars.

1. They are a *Testimony* of their *Discipleship*. This is a part of the sense that *Stella* giveth of it; *Eveniet vobis in signum, & attestationem, quod vere discipuli mei fidelissimi estis*. All those that follow a teacher, under a shew, or pretence of learning from him, are in common phrase and way of speaking called his disciples; so it was with Christ, while he was on Earth he had some that followed him for the loves, some that believed on him, but he committed not himself unto them, because he knew all men, *Joh.*
2. 24. These were disciples *in outward appearance*, they looked like disciples,



ples, but indeed were not. *He hath others* who are *ὄψις μαθηταί*, his disciples indeed. None is a *Disciple* indeed to another, who doth not really and actually learn of him, either from his words, or from his example in his life and conversation. What faith our Saviour? *Matth. 16. 24. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me.* Observe it, *Take up his Cross.* It is a great Testimony that a man is *Christs Disciple*, not in name and outward profession only, but in reality, when he can take up his Cross. It is reported of *Ignatius*, that after all his sufferings he said, *Now begin I to be a Disciple.*

2. *It will be a Testimony of their Membership with Christ, and conformity to him.* The Apostle tells us, *Rom. 8. 29. That we are predestinated, that we might be conformed to the Image of his Son.* There is the *Image of a living Christ*, and the *Image of a dying Christ.* The *Image of a living Christ* is in *Holiness* and *Righteousness*, *Ephes. 4. 23. Col. 3. 10.* Thus the holy man is conformed to the *Image of Christ*; but then there is the *Image of a dying Christ.* We are conformed to that *Image of Christ* only by suffering. The Apostle prayeth, *Phil. 3. 10. That he might know the fellowship of Christs sufferings, and be made conformable unto his death.* It is true, we are made conformable to the death of *Christ* in a measure, when we die unto sin, as he died for sin, so we die to sin;

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thus

this is an inward, spiritual conformity, which we come to by *mortification*; but there is also a more external, obvious conformity to the death of Christ, and that is, as he suffered striving against sin, and bearing a witness to the Truth, so we also suffer bearing a Testimony to Truth, and striving against sin; this we never arrive at till we come to be sufferers, and our suffering upon these single accounts, turn to us for a Testimony of such our conformity to Christ. Yea, it is a Testimony of our Membership in and with Christ. Christ is the Head of the Church, which is the Body, and we are said to be Members of Christ, and Members also one of another. You have a notable expression, *Col. I. 24. Who now rejoyce in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his bodys sake, which is the Church. That which is behind of the Afflictions of Christ. Is there any thing behind of Christs sufferings? Hath he not suffered, and entred into his glory, where he is impassible, living with, and unto God, where he can suffer and die no more? The sufferings of Christ are to be considered in a double notion, either as Expiatory or Exemplary. If we consider them as Expiatory, there is nothing of them behind, nothing of them to be filled up. He said upon the Cross, All is finished. And he trod the Wine-press of his Fathers wrath alone; there was none of the people with him. But if you consider them as they were*

were *Exemplary*, as he *suffered*, setting us an example; so there is much of the *Afflictions* of Christ to be *filled up*; and they are to be filled up in the bodies of his Saints. Or else thus; *Christ* is taken personally or *mystically*. Christ *mystically* is the Church, he the Head, Believers Members, both making but one body, and that his body which is the Church. Now of *Christ* (taken in this sense) much of his *Afflictions* are to be filled up. And Christians suffering in conformity to Christ, is a Testimony to them that they are *Members* of an afflicted Christ; yea and also that they are Members of that body, of which Christ is the Head; for in all Ages it hath been the Lot of those who would live godly in Christ Jesus, to suffer persecution.

3. It turns unto a Testimony to them, both of the truth, and of the strength of their Faith. The Apostle describing Faith, *Heb. 11. 1.* calleth it the evidence of things not seen, the *substance of things hoped for*. For, saith the Apostle, *What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?* Many talk of Faith, few understand it. The work of Faith lies in a being persuaded of God, and depending upon God for the things which we do not see. Now it is the want of this Faith which makes men shrink in a day of Trial. The Apostle, *Heb. 10. 34. ch. 11. 13, 14, 16.* concludes from the Servants of God (of whom he there speaks) *taking joyfully the*

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*spoiling*

*How Persecution turneth*

*spoiling of their goods; that they knew in themselves that they had in Heaven a better and an enduring substance. And from their confessing that they were Strangers and Pilgrims upon the Earth, that they plainly declared that they sought a Country, and desired a better Country, that is, an heavenly. Mens unwillingness to suffer the loss of any thing, that shall be made up with so great advantage, speaketh them at least weak in Faith, and but faintly persuaded of that better state; and that they find a difficulty to depend upon God's Word for it. But when men can freely for the Name of Christ leave their Country, and go into Banishment, part with their Estates, and be content to be stript of all they have, part with their Liberty, and be content with a Prison; part with their Lives, and bid Death, even a violent, and most ignominious Death, welcome, it argueth that they both truly and strongly believe what God hath revealed concerning a better Country, a more enduring Substance, the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, a life everlasting, and full of glory; and not only that they are persuaded of the truth of the things, but they depend and rely upon God, and by hope patiently wait upon God for the bestowing these things upon them, and making them their portion. Now what would not many a good Christian give for an Evidence of the truth and reality of his Faith? How many*

many doubts, how many fears hath he oft times about it! An ability to suffer for the Name of Christ mightily tends to their confirmation. The Apostle therefore putteth them together, *Phil. 1. 29. Unto you it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.* Suffering, a freedom to suffer is a great confirmation of our Faith, both to our selves, and also to others.

4. It will be a Testimony to the people of God of their *Love to him.* True Faith worketh by Love. Love to another is discerned in nothing more than in suffering for them; and indeed this is the height of Love. It speaks a Soul to have discerned a great excellency in Christ, and in heart to cleave to him, that rather than part with him, will suffer the loss of any thing. Upon this account among the Heathens is celebrated the Love of *Pilades* and *Orestes*, *Thesens* and *Pirithous*, &c. But see it in *Paul*, *Phil. 3. 8. Yea doubtless, and I account all things but loss for the excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ.* The Soul that may have had its doubts and fears whether it loveth Christ or no, measuring its affections to this spiritual, invisible Object, by the motions of its affections to Objects more sensible, (which indeed is not a true and just measure) can doubt no longer,

when once the Lord hath enabled the Soul to suffer for his Name sake, it speaks a Soul to love Christ more than all sensible things, when to serve and enjoy him, it hath freely parted with whatever it had of sensible enjoyments and satisfaction. Nothing speaks Love like a deep suffering for the Object beloved, *Gen. 22. 12.* Now (saith God to Abraham) *I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from me.* That term of fear, and fearing God, in the Old Testament, hath often a larger sense, than as signifying that passion which we call fear. God then knows that a Soul loveth him, and the Soul it self may know that it loveth God, when it can readily and chearfully suffer for his Names sake.

5. Lastly; It will be to a Soul not only a Testimony of Faith and Love, and Patience, and Perseverance, and Constancy, Steadiness and Unmoveableness in the work of the Lord, but it will be also a Testimony of the *Soul's Zeal for God.* Zeal is rather the intention of all the affections, than a particular affection of it self. A small degree of Love will not carry a Soul thorough sufferings. That Love must be at a great degree of warmth, which shall carry a Soul thorough great difficulties, great trials, great losses.

6. To these I may add one thing more. Suffering for the Name of Christ is a *Testimony*



mony of the presence of God with the Soul. The Three Childrens induring the fiery Furnace, was a Testimony of a fourth persons being with them, *Dan. 3. 15.* Daniels being in the Den of Lions, and induring that danger, turned to him for a Testimony of God's special presence with him, and sending his Angels to stop the mouths of the Lions. Paul's courageous suffering was a Testimony to him that the Lord stood by him, and strengthened him, *2 Tim. 4. 17.* A Christian needs desire no more than a token of God's special presence. No man suffereth for God without the special presence of God. None can pass through these deep Waters, nor this hot Fire, unless the Lord be with him, according to his promise, *Isa. 43. 2.* Thus now I have opened the second thing, and shewed you how a good Christians suffering for the Name of Christ, turneth unto him for a Testimony towards God.

I find yet some other senses given of these words, which I shall but name.

3. It shall turn unto you for a Testimony, that is, say some, for a Testimony for the Truth. The Sufferings of God's people are their Testimony indeed. *Μαρτυριον*, Martyrdom signifies a Testimony. I know not how to fix upon this as the sense of the words, because of the Pronoun, *To you.* For those Souls must be rooted and grounded in the Truth, that are persuaded to suffer for it, unless we will say that the Primitive is here put

for the Possessive, and *ὑμῶν* the same with *ὑμῶν*, and the sense is this; It shall be *your* Testimony. It is indeed the sealing of their Testimony, and a real Testimony to the Truth of Christ, and that which alone some are able to give, as that female *Martyr*, who told her Persecutors, *She could not dispute for Christ, but she could die for Christ.* Every one cannot give a Verbal Testimony; they can conceive, and believe more than they can with their Tongues express. Suffering is their Testimony.

4. *In Testimonium contumacia eorum qui non crediderint*, for a Testimony of the stubbornness of those who shall not believe. The sufferings of God's people for the Truth, speak the stubbornness of men that will not embrace that Truth which the Servants of God seal with their bloods. But I shall not enlarge upon this, not judging it the best account of the Phrase. I have done with the Doctrinal part of my Discourse, and come now unto the *Application* of it, which will be dispatched under two Heads. The first of *Discouragement to the Enemies of Christ and his Gospel.* The second of *Encouragement to the friends of it.*

#### USE I.

For *Discouragement to the Enemies of Christ, and his Gospel.* It shall be that, *1 Sam. 2. 3. Talk no more so exceeding proudly;*

ly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouths, for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. The Bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girt with strength. Sinners out of their innate Enmity to Christ, are ready to talk proudly by their threats, Lord (say the Apostles) *Acts 4. 29. Behold their threats, and to act cruelly and barbarously.* Every wise man propoundeth to himself an end of his actions, and doth nothing but for some end, that shall be worthy of his pains; not willing to labour in vain, and to bring forth nothing but trouble and sorrow. The *Actions* as to which I am discouraging you, and from which I am dehorting you, are those mentioned in the verse before my Text; *laying hands upon the people of God, persecuting them, delivering them into prisons, &c. for Christ's Names sake.* I would willingly have all men think with themselves what their End of such actions is. It is one of these two, either that themselves may live *alone in the Earth*, and enjoy their sensual satisfactions without disturbance, and the sensible enjoyments of the World without any Rivals, or Competitors: Or else that they might ruine the Interest of God in the World. Now, admitting that to be a truth which you have heard, that these sufferings shall be a *Testimony*, turn for a Testimony, none of these Ends are feasible. If they be a Testimony, and shall turn to God's people for a Testimony against

## *How Persecution turneth*

gainst the *Adversaries*, they are not like by such actions to advance themselves, by actions which are *evident tokens* of their perdition, both a sudden destruction here, and an eternal destruction hereafter. There are two bodies of people, of which no instance can be given, but that God after a short time that he hath made use of them for his purpose, he hath destroyed them. The first are Armies, the second are Bands and Troops of Persecutors; there hath been some of these in all times, some need of them, God, the wise God, in his Government of the World, hath had occasion to make use of them. You shall observe, that the generality of these bodies are usually made up of the dregs of Mankind. God hath often used them, but they have never lasted long; of all bodies of people, they have been the most *mutable*, perishing bodies. The first are usually guilty of much blood and cruelty, (for it is an hard thing for men with their Swords in their hands, to keep from smiting but where the Lord bids them smite.) The latter are guilty of *blood* mingled with rage and malice against what is supremely good, their rage is against Heaven, and they at last find it hard to kick against the pricks. So far is the Persecutor in reaching his ends, in advancing and setting up himself, that he finds he hath taken the next course to ruine and destroy himself. Look back upon the Records of time; you read in Holy Writ of several Troops of

of Persecutors; The Jews, Where are they? They were the first owners of the Field of Blood; they are scattered, and Vagabonds over all the Earth. The *Roman Empire*, those I mean that ruled it, were the next. Where are those great Powers that were a terrour to all the World? The stump of that Empire remaineth in *Germany*, that is, all the *Papists* are yet in play, but God hath broken them in many places. What is become of all the Generation of those in *Queen Mary's* days? *Gardiner* was soon cut off in his wickedness; *Bonner* buried upon a Dung-hill. I do but name some things to you, leaving it to you to look back and see where you can find that there hath been any Troop or Band of Persecutors, that God in a short time hath not scattered by his providence, and broken, or any single person almost, who hath been eminent in these Achievements, that hath died an old man, and full of days, and gone with peace to his Grave. Tell me who ever prospered in this Trade? When the Devil thus entrencheth into a man, it is a Testimony that God is about to destroy him, and that his Judgment is not far off. What is it then that a man in such actions should propound to himself as the end? Is it the rooting out of Truth, the doing of a mischief to the people of God whom he hateth? Alas! neither of these ends are practicable or feasible. The sufferings of God's people have always rooted and confirmed the Truths of God,

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the Truths of the Gospel have got as much confirmation by the steady sufferings of the people of God in the defence of them, as they have done by the Preaching of them. Three things have mightily contributed to settle mens minds in the Truth, and to propagate the *Knowledge, Faith, and Love* of it: The Preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles, and since by the faithful Ministers of the Gospel. The miraculous operations, by which the first Ministers of the Gospel confirmed their Divine Mission. 3. The undaunted, courageous sufferings of God's people. Miracles quickly ceased, while they were wrought, but few saw the operation of them; others then; we since have but had the report of them. The great things that have propagated Truth, the Truths of the Gospel, have been Preaching and Suffering; the Preaching of Ministers, and the Sufferings both of Ministers and People. Those who have not Faith enough to believe the Scripture (upon their belief of which hangs all the credit of the Miracles we there read of) yet have had sense enough to discern men dying with boldness and courage in a steady owning of the Propositions of the Gospel. And it is natural to us to think there is something of truth in those Propositions, in the defence of which men will adventure to die, and lose all their sensible enjoyments. What do men then aim at? Would they do a mischief to their Enemies, and do they mistake the Ministers of the

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the Gospel, and such as fear God for such? Alas! neither can they reach this end. Their sufferings turn to them for a *Testimony*; a *Testimony* from God to them, of an honour he puts upon them, great grace which he hath bestowed, and will yet further bestow upon them, an exceeding great reward, either with their sufferings, or after their sufferings; either in this life, or in the life which is to come. Why then do people rage? Why do they imagine a vain thing? O that I could persuade them to sound a retreat from this Battel, which cannot but end in their own ruine, and their Enemies Victory.

*Obj. But I hear some saying, Is there any that would go about to make men suffer for Christs Names sake? May not men be made sufferers for their disobedience to the Laws of the place where they live, but they must suffer for Christ's Names sake?*

*Sol. I answer, God forbid, that Christs name should be made use of by any who pretend to him to patronize, Treason or Rebellion or any disturbance of the Civil Order or Peace. Nay, men radically good, may for ought I know suffer as evil-doers. If Peter had been made to suffer for drawing out the Sword, and cutting off Malchus his ear, I know none could have defended him, it is not like his master would, who reproved him for it, and told him, That those who took the sword should  
perish*

## How Persecution turneth

perish by the sword. Christ did not justify that action as done for his *names sake*, tho it was for *his sake*, yet it was spoiled by the rashness and disorderliness of it, and the want of authority to do what he did; the doing of an action for Christs name sake signifyeth the doing it at his command, and by his order as well as for his honour and glory.

2. *All innocent suffering is not a suffering for Christs name sake.* A man suffereth innocently, when he suffereth for a pretended crime of which he is not guilty, when men lay to their charge things which they know not; but every one who thus suffereth, suffereth not for Christs name sake, *Naboth* was put to death upon a false subornation, but he was no sufferer for Gods sake, but for his own just rights and liberties. Indeed all stand concerned to take heed, that they be no causes nor instruments of, and in mens suffering innocently, for it is a dreadful guilt, *Exod. 23. 7. Psal. 10. 8. 15. 5.* It was one of the crying sins which brought Vengeance on the Jews, that amongst them was found the blood of *Innocents*, *Jer. 2. 24.* and that they had filled the land with the Blood of innocents, *Jer. 19. 4.* But wicked men may fill a nation with the blood of innocents, and yet not with the blood of such as suffer for Christs name sake.

3. I told you before, that a suffering for Christs name sake must be a suffering for him, not meerly for our selves, in defending our personal

personal just rights, nor yet for *our* countrey in defending its just liberties, but for Christ, in maintaining his *truths* and *ordinances*, whether relating to his worship, or to mens lives and conversations. As the holy *Martyrs* of old chose rather to dye and to lose all they had, then to deny Christ, and not to publish his gospel, and to live up to his laws for Worship and Holiness.

4. Lastly as a suffering for the maintenance of any civil rights, if for them meerly, is no suffering for Christs names sake, so no *civil Edicts*, or *Laws* can take away a *Christians* honour in suffering for Christ, and for his names sake, if indeed their suffering be of this nature, that is, for this cause, *Acts* 5. 41. The Apostles went away rejoicing, that they were counted worthy to suffer for his name. Yet it was contrary to the command of the *Sanhedrim*, v. 28. If a suffering for Christs name shall turn to them for such a Testimony, all men that love their own Souls, or lives, or whatever is dear to them, stand highly concerned to take heed, that they raise not against themselves any such testimony, or evident token of perdition, as the Apostle calls it.

USE. II.

If what you have heard be truth, if *Christians* sufferings for Christs names sake shall turn unto them for a Testimony, (which is Christs own assertion) if it turn to them for such

such a *testimony* as you have heard opened; if you search the Scriptures and find these things are indeed so as I have opened to you: You see what reason Christians have in such sufferings, to count it all joy, when they fall into diverse Temptations, according to the Counsell of *James, ch. I. v. 3.* To rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is their reward in Heaven, according to our Saviours exhortation, *Matth. 5. 12.* To rejoice for as much as they are partakers of Christs sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, they may also be glad with exceeding joy. To be in nothing terrified by adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of Salvation, and that of God. *Phil. 1. 28.* I beseech you sit down and consider seriously with your selves what a Testimony of Gods favour, what a mark of honour from him is worth, what a Testimony is worth to your Souls, that you are some of those, who shall one day be glorified, if you be such who are serious in the business of eternity, and keep any watch upon the influences of God upon your Souls, think with your selves what in your sad, and melancholick reflections at some times you would give, that God would shew you a token for good, *Psal. 86. 17.* David begs of God that he would shew him such a Token. This is such a token as God shewed Paul to clear him with, *Acts chap. 23. v. 11.* The Lord stood by him and said, Be of good cheer Paul! for as thou hast testified of me at Hierusalem, so must thou also bear witness at

at Rome. Be of good cheer! one would have thought it should have quite deadned *Paul*, and put him out of all good cheer. God did not so judge, he would not have said so to his Servant, if he had not judged, that it had been a proper argument of comfort, and for the filling of his Soul with chearfulness. Let not therefore your hearts fail, indeed this ought to be no argument to a Christian to pull troubles of this nature upon himself, he ought to maintain both the wisdom of a serpent and the innocency of a dove, and to look that he cometh by his sufferings honestly. But to suffer as a Christian is not a matter of trouble, or shame, but a good cause to glorify God, 1 Pet. 4. 16. What would not any confederate christian give to have a testimony that he is one whom God delighteth to honour; one whom the Lord hath influenced with great degrees of grace, and intendeth yet further to influence, one whom God designeth a great reward for, either in this life or that which is to come, to have a Testimony that he is a Disciple of Christ, and that not in name, but in deed, a true Believer, one that loveth God, and that not in word and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth? I have read of one who in a great agony of Spirit had this expression: *I could be content to lye in Hell a thousand years were I sure then but to have one good look from God.* What saith the Apostle? *If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.* If you suffer as Christians you may speak to your adversaries in the language of that ancient

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Martyr;

Martyr. *Sententiis vestris gratias agimus; quum à vobis damnamur à Christo absolvimur;* We thank you for your sentences; when you do condemn us, Christ absolveth us. In our Book of Martyrs we read of the condemnation of three famous Martyrs, all Bishops, *Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer.* The first replieth to his Judges, *I appeal from this your sentence to the Judgment seat of God.* The second told them, *Although I be not of your company, yet I doubt not but my name is written in a better place, whither your sentence will send me sooner.* The third saith, *I thank God most heartily that he hath prolonged my life to this time.* Mark how all these good men counted it all joy when they fell into these terrible temptations; a good Christian ought not indeed to desire suffering for Christs sake; the Apostle speaking of suffering saith, *1 Pet. 3. 17. It is better (if the will of God be so) that ye suffer for well doing then for evil doing.* Sufferings are things ingrateful to the flesh, and upon that score evils, as they are temptations. Our flesh always is crying to us, *Master, spare thy self.* They are not therefore to be desired. No man knoweth what his heart will prove in an hour of trial, but if *it be the will of God, you suffer* (saith the Apostle.) It is never the will of God that we should suffer (in that sense wherein the Apostle there mentioneth the will of God) but when we suffer for doing the will of God, if this be our lot, that a shower overtaketh us, walking not in any crooked paths of our own, but in the way



way of Gods commandments let us re-  
joice, Christ is magnified in our body (as  
the Apostle speaketh) *Phil. 1. 20.* And as  
Christ is magnified in you, so you are magni-  
fied by Christ. *The spirit of glory and of God  
resting upon you. 1 Pet. 4. 15.* Wherefore (as  
the same Apostle saith) *Let them that suffer  
according to the will of God, commit the keeping  
of their Souls to him, in well doing as unto, a  
faithful creator. v. 19.* I need not much en-  
large in this branch of application. What it  
is to suffer for *Christs name sake*, I have in my  
former discourse shewed you. There are  
(as I have shewed you) arguments enough in  
these few words; *It shall turn unto you for a  
Testimony.*

USE III

Let us therefore in the last place labour for  
this degree of grace, *That we maybe ready to  
suffer for the name of Jesus Christ.* It is every  
mans wisdom, though he be at present in health  
to prepare for sickness, because sickness is but  
a common accident to mortality, & none can  
promise himself that he shall always enjoy  
his health. I call this *Grace*, for the Apostle  
lets us know, it must be given unto us to suf-  
fer. *Phil. 1. 29.* There are but two things  
that I know of necessary to us for suffering  
1. *The one is a mortified heart to the World*, both  
in the sensual satisfactions, and in the sensible  
enjoyments of it. We may do a great deal  
toward this by considering the vanity, and

incertainty of these things, the inconsiderableness of them weighed and compared with the enjoyments of God: By disusing our selves to them, &c. The second is *courage*; now this is partly natural, and morally; partly infused: There is a natural, and moral courage which many have shewed in their personal dangers, and in the more publick dangers of their country; we find a great deal of this, amongst Pagans, this will not do in this case. The courage here necessary must be given from above, and the product of Faith in things that are invisible. It is a courage by which Christians are as the Apostle saith, *out of weakness made strong*--by which *Women have received their dead raised to life again*, Heb. 10. 34, 35. For this we had need be much in *Prayer*. Our Saviour commandeth us that we should *Pray*, *that we enter not into Temptation*. And Luke 21. 36. (with which I shall conclude) *Watch ye therefore* (saith our Saviour) and *Pray always*, *that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man*. We ought to pray that we enter not into *Temptation*, as *Temptation* signifies no more then trials, but more especially in a second sense as *Temptation* signifieth a *motion to sin*, which is the *Temptation* of the former temptations. But if that it be not the will of God that we should escape *temptations* in the former sense, yet we may escape them in the latter sense, and may be able to stand *before the Son of man*. That sufferings

ferings may not be Testimonies against us, which they will be if we be ashamed of the Lord Jesus, or of his truths, or ways, but that they may (as is here promised) turn unto us for a testimony for us.

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